

C A R O L I N E

O F

L I C H T F I E L D;

A N O V E L.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH.

BY THOMAS HOLCROFT.

Idole d'un cœur juste, & passion du Sage,
Amitié, que ton nom soutienne cet ouvrage;
Règne dans mes écrits, ainsi que dans mon cœur,
Tu m'appris à connoître, à sentir, le bonheur.

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C A R O L I N E
O F
L I C H T F I E L D.

THESE two letters being sent, and thus being more tranquil, relative to the fate of Matilda, the Count applied himself wholly to the plan he had formed, in order to ascertain the happiness of Caroline. He had desired the High Cham-

berlain to come to Ronebourg, so soon as his daughter should be informed of the death of the Baroneſſ. It could not be long before Lindorf muſt arrive, and the Count was determined to set off for Berlin the moment he came; pretending to have received an order from the King, and to leave Lindorf at Ronebourg, with the High Chamberlain, that he might obtain a divorce from his Maſteſy, and his conſent, alſo, for the marriage of Lindorf and Caroline. He then intended to write and inform them of their happiness; and, without ſeeing them, to depart for Dresden. From Dresden, he meant to go to England with Matilda; or without her, if ſhe determined to marry the young Baron de Zaſtrow; and to reſide there with his mother's relations. He felt ſufficient for-titude to make Caroline and his friend



happy, but not to be a daily witness of their loves ; and this plan, once fixed, he held to be unalterable.

Alas ! he knew not yet all the power of love ; had yet not felt all its vengeful effects. The more he struggled with passion the deeper was it rooted in his heart. How often, when beside Caroline, unable to restrain his feelings, was he ready to kneel at her feet, confess his affection, his internal struggles, his despair ; appeal to her generosity, recall to mind the sacred bond by which they were united, the vows they had mutually made, and employ every resource, of pity and of passion, in supplicating her consent to live and die with the husband by whom she was adored. By flight only could he obtain a victory over himself, on these occasions. Once

out of her sight, and virtue, delicacy, and friendship, again were ascendant. Love ceded to duty ; and he had the fortitude to imagine Caroline in the arms of another, and not expire at the thought ! Then would he remember Lindorf, banished from his country, dragging an unhappy being through foreign climates, deprived of his mistress and his friend, without consolation and without hope ; and, remembering, shudder and detest his weakness : again renew his oaths to subdue it, and, fearing to expose himself to future dangers, deprive himself of the pleasure of seeing Caroline ; who, ill interpreting the cause of his absence, would, on her part, weep and afflict herself at conduct which she supposed to be the most unequivocal proof of indifference.

In her moments of vexation and despair, she strengthened herself in the resolution of returning to Rindaw, and of entreating, nay, of absolutely requiring his consent, should he offer any opposition. "Alas!" would she reply to this doubt, "far from opposing, he will gladly seize the means of living separate from Caroline.—Separate!—What! am I no more to see him, to hear him no more? And, when I quit this place, must a lasting separation ensue? And must I ask it; must I myself pronounce the fatal sentence? No! never shall I acquire force adequate to a task like this! When he shall have the cruelty to command, submission will surely be sufficient punishment."

Yet did her friendship for the Baroneſs, at ſome moments, make her even desire this

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separation, and vanquish her fears of quitting Walstein. The High Chamberlain, as had been concerted with the Count, endeavoured to prepare her to support the death of her friend. In his first letters, he spoke of remedies she had taken, to recover her sight, which were powerful and somewhat dangerous. He afterwards wrote word her blindness was past cure, and that it afflicted her so much she had fallen ill. Caroline no sooner heard this than she wished to fly to attend and console her; but she herself was yet too feeble for the fatigues of such a journey. She wrote the most affecting letters, both to her friend and her father; and, every returning courier, hoped to hear of her recovery. At length the letters of the High Chamberlain became so alarming, and affirmed so positively

tively the Baronesse of Rindaw was in the utmost danger, that Caroline immediately determined to set off; and sent to beg the Count would come and speak with her.

He found her with her eyes swimming in tears, and well divined their cause.— “O! Sir,” said she, the moment he entered, “read here what my father has written! My dear Mamma is very, very ill; nay, perhaps worse than he says. Let me intreat you to give immediate orders for my departure; for I will instantly be gone to Rindaw. Never shall I forgive myself for having delayed so long. Should I be too late, should I never more behold the tenderest, dearest of friends—”

The Count, finding this idea had presented itself to her mind, and that the

apprehension had had half its effect, thought this the time to inform her of the truth: beside that her resolution to depart immediately, made secrefy any longer impossible.—“ Dear Caroline,” said he, seating himself beside her, and taking one of her hands, “ let me intreat you, in the name of Heaven, to be calm; think of the injury you may do yourself! Scarcely recovered from a most dangerous illnes, can you sustain—”

“ Yes any thing, every thing! It is my duty to devote my returning strength to the service of the friend who has been, to me, the best and tenderest of mothers. I feel how much I have neglected this duty, and shall, indeed, be most happy, may I but have the means to repair my wrongs.”

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She was going to rise and make preparations, but the Count again detained her. "A moment, dear Caroline, be appeased for a moment, I conjure you, and listen to me—I have also received a letter from your father."

"Merciful God!" cried she, turning pale, and presaging what was coming; "a letter to you! Tell me! I beg you, instantly, tell me its contents. Has my father concealed any thing?—Oh! Sir,—" Her oppressed heart could no longer resist the violence of agitation, and her sobs interrupted speech. The silence of the Count, his downcast eyes, the timid compassion of his countenance, and the vague answers he returned, confirmed her fears, and her despair became excessive. "Oh God! Oh God!" exclaimed she, "I perceive, I

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perceive I no longer have a friend, no longer have anything in this world! My dear Mama no longer exists, and I have lost my all!"

"Not so, dear Caroline; there still is a friend in the world, who hopes to prove how dear you are to him, and how much he is interested in your happiness."

Caroline loved this friend too well herself to be wholly insensible of that consolation he wished to impart; and to those new proofs of tenderness which she no longer had dared to hope. Her tears still flowed, abundantly flowed, but less bitterly. In the assaults of violent grief, the feeling and impassioned mind experiences relief by the company of a beloved object, and in the alleviations of love. She grieved, but the Count grieved with her, felt as she felt, and

and partook of her affliction. In these their moments of melancholy, their souls were in unison. Caroline had lost the tenderest of friends, but the very moment in which she was informed of this misfortune was that which gave her the sweet hope of being beloved, by the husband she adored ; for, in this first transport of despair, which softened fortitude and shewed Caroline still more lovely, the Count was not able wholly to repress his passion. The sorrow of Caroline demanded every care and consolation friendship could afford ; and Walstein, while he endeavoured to assume the form of friendship, had all the tenderest actions and looks of love. Caroline, thus, in the midst of affliction, had a glimpse of a happy futurity, and mourned that her friend was not to be a witness of her bliss.

She desired to be informed, circumstantially, of her illness and death ; but the Count, who understood nothing so ill as dissimulation, referred her to the High Chamberlain, who would soon return ; yet, to quiet her remorse for having too long delayed going to the aid of her friend, he told her she had died some time since, and when it was impossible for Caroline to have gone to her assistance. No sooner was the High Chamberlain informed that his daughter knew the truth than he returned to Ronebourg, and told her, himself, she was left sole heiress to the Canoneess. She had made her will anew, after she had been informed of her marriage, and it was to the Countess of Walstein she had bequeathed all her possessions : she had indeed left a legacy to the Count, purposely, as she herself had word-

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ed it, to prove how highly she was satisfied at his union with Caroline. She recommended, in most affecting terms, the happiness of this her beloved pupil, to Walstein ; and to Caroline that of the best and most sublime of men.

The reading of the will drew many tears from Caroline ; nor was the Count less affected. The High Chamberlain, alone, read it with perfect satisfaction, and comprehended not how an augmentation of fortune could become the subject of sorrow. Caroline, alas ! found only new motives, in these benefactions, to regret a friend so tender and so generous. Walstein, distracted by a thousand contrary sensations, could not hear of union and happiness, which he so soon was to renounce, without extreme emotion. When the Baron came
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to that article, he suddenly kneeled to Caroline ; “ yes,” said he, with vehement transport, “ yes, by honour, by love, by every thing sacred I swear, you shall be happy, Caroline.”—He could not continue ; and Caroline, affected to excess, tenderly stretched out her hand to raise him, while she felt, more powerfully than ever, that on him, only, of all the world, this her promised happiness depended, and on the sentiments he should entertain for her.

Had they been alone, perhaps, she might then have told him what hers really were ; perhaps this might have been the happy moment of an explanation too long delayed ; but the presence of the placid High Chamberlain checked such effusions of the heart. He, with wonderful tranquillity, continued to read the will ; which contained

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ed nothing farther, except legacies to servants and vassals. The Count, unable to support the continuance of his present emotion and the tears of the compassionate Caroline, left the room and walked into the park, whither all his feelings went with him. He began no longer to understand his own proceedings; and, sometimes, asked himself wherefore he thus should wilfully be for ever miserable. Wherefore should he yield the possession of her on whom he had so many claims, and without whom it was impossible to live? "She begins," thought he, "to be accustomed to me; nay I even think I behold expressions of affection in her eyes. Alas! I know it can be but friendship, esteem, gratitude; yet may not these sensations, in a mind like hers, well supply the place of love? Or may I ever hope to inspire others? Does she not already grant
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more than I could ever expect? But, while I know, past doubt, her heart wholly appertains to another, to Lindorf!—Lindorf? Alas! perhaps he no longer is in existence; perhaps he has fallen a victim to a passion the effects of which I have every cause to fear; perhaps he has sunk under his grief, under the grief of Caroline, by which my own heart has been so often wounded, and which must be renewed, with such excess, should she hear tidings so fatal!

The Count shuddered while he imagined he himself might be the messenger to inform Caroline of the death of the man she loved; that he himself must then be considered as the cause of his death. The silence of Lindorf, after the short letter he could not but have received, appeared to him a certain proof his fears were but too well founded;

founded ; and so much did this and such like fears torment him that scarcely could reason sustain the conflicts of the heart. At one moment he would passionately wish the return of Lindorf, and dread it worse than death the next ; equally fearing to see him arrive or to hear he was no longer in existence. Thus did a man so philosophic, so sage, so wholly, till then, master of himself, at length, feel the empire of passion and its tyrannic power ; and, while thus he felt, terrified at its effects, again he swore to vanquish it, to devote himself, if it were not too late, to the felicity of those he loved.

From one of these tormenting terrors he was, at last, relieved. He received a letter from Varner, the valet de chambre of Lindorf, to whom he had given his short
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and pressing letter, written to conjure his friend to return. "The good Varner en-
" treated his Excellency not to be uneasy
" at not having yet received an answer to
" this letter, for that, when he came to
" Hamburg, his master was not there; he
" had embarked, a few days before, for
" England, with a Saxon gentleman; and
" he, Varner, detained three weeks at
" Hamburg by contrary winds, had neither
" been able to join his master, who ex-
" pected him at London, nor, consequent-
" ly, to remit him the letter his Excellen-
" cy had confided to his care."

The first pleasure of the Count was to learn that Lindorf still lived, and, by being able to travel, was in good health. Nor was this pleasure single; Lindorf had not received his letter, his return was therefore

fore deferred, and this short delay, which likewise deferred the moment when Walstein should be obliged to quit Caroline, cede her to another, and live for ever from her, was to him an age of happiness. He hastened therefore to her chamber, that he might not lose moments so precious. Her father was with her. "My dear Count," said the High Chamberlain, as Walstein entered, "my daughter, here, is exceedingly desirous of quitting Ronebourg, but dares not speak to you on the subject. For my part, I can see no reason in the world why you should remain longer here; for, at present, the Countess is sufficiently recovered to undertake the journey. The King may complain of your long absence; he commanded me to hasten your return to Berlin, and in a tone that will not admit of longer delay. I must certainly be gone; for

for my presence is absolutely necessary at court. If, therefore, your Excellency shall think proper to give orders, we will incontinently depart together."

The Count made no reply, but fixed his eyes on Caroline, in order to inquire of her countenance what was passing in her heart, and whether she really wished to leave Ronebourg. Caroline blushed, looked down, and, by her silence, seemed to approve. Yet was the embarrassment of the Count beyond description great. He could not be ignorant how much the King desired his return; for, since his arrival from Russia, he had only remained four and twenty hours at Berlin; and had had but one short interview with his Majesty. To the friendship of the Sovereign, only, was he indebted for his present long absence; and frequent couriers brought him pres-

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sing letters from the King ; or rather from a man who reclaimed his friend. Walstein knew, likewise, that his marriage with Caroline was then become public. The High Chamberlain, who so long had laboured with this secret, had told it the whole world, as soon as his daughter was gone to Ronebourg. The King himself, knowing the Count and Countess were together, had openly spoken of their union ; wherefore longer mystery was impossible. Yet how might the Count, with his present intentions, take Caroline to Berlin as the Countess of Walstein, and there present her at court, and to every body, by a name she so soon was to quit ?

He then felt how much the delay of his letter to Lindorf deranged all his projects. He no longer could refuse the request of the King, which might every moment be changed

changed to a command ; he could not think of leaving Caroline, alone, at Ronebourg ; and still less of taking her to Rindaw, where every thing must tend to nourish and increase affliction. While reflecting, in this dilemma, how he must act, Caroline, pressed by her fatner to confirm her desire to depart immediately, said, " she should, with pleasure, accompany my Lord the Count to Berlin ; but that she hoped both he and the King would have the goodness, for some time, to dispense with her seeing company ; and that, while she remained in mourning, she might be permitted to live retired."

Walstein eagerly caught the idea ; and the health of Caroline, not yet sufficiently re-established, together with her deep mourning for a friend whom she had loved

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as a mother, were, in reality, excellent pretexts for complying with her request, and neither receiving nor paying visits, at Berlin, for some months. In less time than that Walstein well might hope his future fate would be decided. Caroline, mean while, would live almost unknown, at Walstein-house, where she would see only her father, and himself; which, to him, was a most pleasing reflection. It was some alleviation to despair not to be obliged to quit her before the dreaded hour of final separation should arrive. The sage in love is but a man. The Count no longer saw impediments. Caroline living in his house, and in his sight, was perfection of bliss ; and, though he still destined her for a man he supposed she loved, though still determined carefully to conceal his own passion, he could
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not refuse himself this intermediate enjoyment of happiness; which, beside, would remove every difficulty, relative to where Caroline should remain.

The day of departure was, therefore, fixed; and the tender Caroline beheld it arrive with rapture. She should no longer live in the mansion of Lindorf: it was now determined she should for ever pass her life with the husband she adored: and she thought herself certain of soon effacing from his memory, by offices of tender affection, the capricious and erroneous conduct which her heart, at present, disclaimed; and which she herself could never pardon. Walstein, attentive to every action and look of Caroline, perceived she went with pleasure; but this pleasure he ascribed to virtue, and to the desire she had,

had, henceforth, of avoiding every thing that might bring Lindorf to memory. His esteem, consequently, his affection, were redoubled; but, thinking thus, he was but the more strongly confirmed in his determination of rewarding the virtue he so much admired.

Behold them, then, at Berlin, and alighting at Walstein-house; a place of so much former terror to Caroline. She entered it with all those gentle sensations, those mild hopes, so sweet to the soul, and which seemed a prelude of the felicity she was about to enjoy. To these succeeded the recollection of her bridal day, her behaviour to the man she now adored, the mixture of hope and fear concerning the real sentiments of the Count, and the melancholy reflection on the death of her dear friend,

whom she wished a witness of her present happiness. These, all conspiring, contributed but to augment that emotion which she no longer could conceal, and which brought the tears into her eyes. The Count saw those tears; his heart melted at the sight; he attributed them to a very different cause, and would instantly have given her every assurance that cause should be removed; but we have before seen the motives by which he was withheld. He would not give her a prospect of bliss as yet uncertain; nor would he have to combat with her delicacy and generosity. Neither, indeed, had he the power to pronounce *I yield Caroline to another.* No, he might have acted; but, on such a subject, he could not have spoken!

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The High Chamberlain supped with them, and retired inflate with joy at beholding his daughter now established Lady of Walstein-house. When he was gone, the Count led Caroline to the apartment which long had been destined to receive her; at the time of his marriage, and while he was far from presaging the events that were to succeed. He had furnished it with all possible taste and magnificence, in the dear expectation that his young and beauteous bride was soon to become its inhabitant. This expectation, at last, was realized. But how? In what manner? And at what moment? How much might he well regret past suspense, and the hope which, during uncertainty, he had cherished!

"This, dear Caroline," said he, as they entered, "is the apartment which has long been reserved for you." Caroline, who supposed a latent reproach was lurking in these few words, looked down, and alternately blushed and turned pale. Walstein saw this, but saw not the true motive. Eager to deprive her of her fears, "you," said he, respectfully kissing her hand, "are absolute here; queen of this apartment, neither I nor any one else shall enter it, without your free permission."

Hastily the Count retired; had he remained a moment longer, he, perhaps, had forgotten Lindorf and all his oaths— "Ye powers of friendship!" cried he, as he entered his own chamber, "sustain my fortitude. Caroline, dear adored Caroline, Lindorf, my friend, appear, be ever present

sent to my imagination, there incessantly repeat you cannot be happy asunder!"

Thus did the whole night pass in mourning over and lamenting his destiny, and the rigid sacrifice which virtue, principle, friendship, and even love itself, loudly demanded. Caroline, though more tranquil, yet slept but little and reflected much. Though her chaste simplicity felt not all the singularity of Walstein's conduct, yet could she not be wholly ignorant that her spouse had a right to partake of her apartment; she thought the wrongs she had done him too many, and too great, not to attribute his leaving her thus to well-founded resentment. Succeeding evenings but confirmed the idea; Walstein, fearing again to encounter dangers he found himself so near sinking under before, not only forbore to

accompany Caroline to her apartment but began, as he had done at Ronebourg, before she knew the death of the Barones, to absent himself as much as possible, and never be with her, except in the presence of her father, or her women; and even then he had an air of constraint, of anxiety, so visible, he feared so much to meet her eyes, or to approach her touch, that she no longer doubted of his indifference; nay, she even dreaded it was aversion. This conduct, far from irritating, sensibly affected Caroline. Herself, alone, and her former caprice did she accuse. Perhaps he sought to punish them, and he had good right; or, rather, her unjust slight, and the dislike she so long had testified, had at length wholly incurred his hatred. Yet his tender and continued cares, his mild and gentle attentions dur-

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ing her illness, and her grief, what were they?—Generosity, natural benevolence, sympathy, compassion; which ever are inherent in the noble mind. But she too plainly saw, at present, the chains by which he was restrained were become detestable; yes, he groaned over that fatality by which they had been united. She recollect^d his travelling design, and doubted not but he still intended it should take place; she even, for a moment, thought to prevent his being again at the pain of proposing her return to Rindaw; and thus, by voluntarily absenting herself from the Count and the court, restore him the liberty of which she thought him so ardently desirous. But this proposal was become much more difficult to execute than when she wrote her letter at Rindaw. At present she loved him, passionately loved him; and

never could she collect the fortitude to abandon the object of this her most tender affection. Therefore, her design was no sooner formed than forsaken; and to that succeeded the resolution to try all possible means of regaining the heart of her husband, and, by love, obliterating the remembrance of former wrongs. While she meditated she hoped. "He is so benevolent, has so much sensibility, is so little inclined to revenge injuries," said she, "that, when he shall behold how infinitely I love him, will he refuse to return my love; or will he not, at least, grant me his friendship?"

Thus did the noble and sympathetic heart of Caroline cling to her Walstein; thus teach her how to estimate his worth; and thus did hope, with mild and benign-

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nant impulse, bid her seek his society with greater assiduity than even he sought to avoid hers. Observant of this new ardor, the Count, far from imagining himself beloved, attributed all the attentions, all the thousand kindnesses of Caroline to systematic gratitude and duty; which a soul so feeling, and so virtuous, as hers, had imposed upon itself. Momentary appearances confirmed the suspicion. Caroline, young and timid, feeling sensations she thought she had not the power to communicate, reproaching herself for, and even exaggerating former errors, fearing by officiousness to displease a husband prejudiced against her, often had an air of reserve and constraint, which persuaded Walstein her heart was acting contrary to its most ardent desires. Sorrowful at the ill success of her endeavours to inspire

affection, often would she suffer melancholy to invade her mind; often would retire to her chamber, and on her lovely cheeks leave traces of tears which the Count imagined to be the bitter tears of duty; shed in lamenting the severity of fate, that separated her from the man she loved.

Him, day after day did Walstein wait for. Him, the lover and the friend, for whom felicity so supreme was held in reserve; nor could he comprehend wherefore he did not return. Beside the letter he had sent by Varner, he had also written after his arrival at Berlin; and his letter, under cover to, and recommended to the care of Lindorf's banker, at Hamburg, by him to be forwarded to England, must have reached him if he were not already on the road, coming back. This letter

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was more pressing than the former. Without fully expressing all he meant, he used every argument to hasten his return. "On this his own happiness and the happiness of those he most loved depended; if prayers and entreaties were not sufficient, he absolutely exacted a compliance.—" Recollect, dear Lindorf, how often you have given me the right of disposing of your future destiny. This right, which I hold from friendship, and, perhaps, from gratitude somewhat too enthusiastic, I now claim. Yes, I now recall to memory every circumstance which may make you hold yourself my debtor to tell you the hour is come when it depends on you to cancel them all, and, by one single act, place all obligation to my account. I can only add, "if in a month, at farthest, I have not the

" pleasure to embrace you, at Walstein-
" house, you will give me reason to doubt
" of an attachment which I think I deserve,
" and to suppose I no longer have a
" friend!"

This letter, so strong, so pressing, remaining unanswered, gave room to imagine, and even to believe that, in fact, Lindorf had set out for Berlin before it arrived at England; and that consequently he must soon be there. Dreadful as this moment was, in which a separation from her he adored was to take place, still Walstein waited for it with a kind of impatience, arising from a conviction it would ascertain the happiness of Caroline, and from a wish of being himself freed from that incertitude which suffers the soul to wander among illusive chimeras, which

an instant might destroy, and to which misery itself is sometimes preferable.

How, indeed, was he to defend himself against the phantoms of hope, seductive and dear as they are to the heart, and whose spells each day became more potent, more irresistible? Nothing, indeed, but the modesty and present error of Walstein could have prevented him from perceiving they were not phantoms, were not illusive. Far from desisting, Caroline was still more affectionate, more attentive, mild and tender. The happiness of her existence was the prize for which she contended. And how might she perform too much for a husband like Walstein, whom she so long had offended, by aversion most unjust; to whom her heart had been unfaithful, and which had so many errors, nay, to Caroline,

line, crimes to obliterate? Repulsing diffidence, therefore, and hoping every thing from perseverance and affection, a thousand kind arts were employed to draw and attach him to her, of which love alone is susceptible, and to which love alone can give such wondrous force.

The Count was exceedingly fond of music, and Caroline was incessant in her endeavours to arrive at excellence. Often did she entreat him to accompany her on the flute or violoncello, which he played equally well; often did she sing, with all the charms of sensibility, the most expressive and melting airs, and such as most were likely to make impression on a soul like Walstein's. The Count had a taste and talents for drawing, but other occupations had prevented him from making

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any great progress in the art. Caroline, on the contrary, educated in retirement, had applied herself with infinite success to that delightful art, which can people solitude, and, in despite of wintry frost, retrace nature's beauties, create meads, rivers, mountains, and forests, and make permanent the fleeting and perishing beauties of Flora. Caroline was particularly successful in flowers and landscapes; which also was the species of painting the Count most preferred. She offered to instruct him, direct his essays, and correct his mistakes; in return for which, she entreated him to select books, and superintend studies which she was desirous to engage in, but which are too generally neglected in the education of women. While he was drawing by her side, sometimes would she read, and her former custom of

reading aloud to her dear mamma, added to the native intelligence and feeling she possessed, rendered her indeed a most excellent reader. Walstein, when he saw her fatigued, would read in his turn; and while her countenance, obedient to the powers of genius, assumed the passion or imbibed the wisdom of the writer, her skilful and delicate fingers would knit, or knot, or embroider, the garter, the purse, or the waistcoat; all of which were destined pledges of affection for her Walstein. Ever desirous of finding new sources to give him pleasure, every action had that for its object. For him only did she exist, and continually would she invent pretexts either to go into his apartment, or invite him into hers. Though she saw no person but him and the High Chamberlain, who supped with them almost every

evening,

evening, never was she dull for want of company. Far from that, she continually refused the solicitations of the Baron to present her at court, seemed most desirous of prolonging her retreat, and, with mild and timid eyes turned to Walstein, said, "never before had she been so happy!" Yet, notwithstanding all the thousand hourly repeated proofs of love which Caroline no longer sought to hide, still did the Count, fascinated by fear, and dreading to yield to the sensations by which he was continually assaulted, repel truth, and retain foregone and chimerical conclusions.

"Not for me," would he say, "is it to be beloved. No, the affectionate, the tender, the adorable Caroline has the art of giving to friendship—alas! what did I say?"

I say? Not even to friendship, but, to simple gratitude, all the appearance and expression of love. It is not the presence of Walstein, but the remembrance of Lindorf, by which she thus is animated; and to him, doubtless, doth she secretly address all those affecting attentions, those tender speeches, and those sweet looks, which may not have me for their true object—What! know I not that she loves Lindorf! Nay, that him she ought to love!—Yet, should it be true!—Should it be me!—Should my present intents, which distract and rend my heart, make me the most ungrateful of men! Should that bliss of angels, which I am reserving for another, be destined by Caroline for me!—Alas, it cannot be.—Oh! Caroline! Caroline!—Yet, how may I know
what

what passes in her heart, without acquainting her with the secrets of my own; without discovering the passion by which I am consumed? And yet how may I make this known, certain, as I am, that duty, generosity, and compassion would dictate her answer? Though she love me not, her present actions and manner prove she would not an instant hesitate to sacrifice her heart and her happiness to me."

Thus tormented, thus agitated, by hope and fear, did the Count make both himself and the tender Caroline miserable. But sensations so violent cannot long endure; Lindorf comes not, nor will the Count find, either in delicacy or friendship, the power to resist love that thus is industrious to convince him it is mutual.

One evening, when the High Chamberlain was detained at court, the Count supped alone with Caroline, who was more tender, more endearing, more enchanting than usual. If she *said* not I love, it was almost impossible to misunderstand her *actions*. The emotion, the agitation of Walstein augmented every moment, and he must either betray his feelings or fly the danger. He just had strength sufficient to perform this painful task, but it was the last effort of reason. Shut up in his own apartment, he reflected on his present state, his love, his claims, and the conduct of Caroline.

"No," said he, "it is not, it cannot be, illusive. I am beloved. I no longer have cause to doubt. If I touch her hand I feel it tremulous; or if she takes mine she gently

ly holds and presses it, unwilling it should be withdrawn ; if I quit her with mournful looks her eyes follow me ; and, this very evening, I beheld them moistened with her tears. All the animation, all the tenderness of affection, were painted in her countenance ; and yet I left her ; yet I forbore to kneel at her feet ; yet I forbear to tell her how infinitely I adore her ; neglect to supplicate a confirmation of my happiness, and of that love which every incident tends but to confirm."

Never had the idea presented itself to him with so much force and certainty : it enrapt him so far that, no longer listening to ought but sweet hope, he determined to return, confess his passion, and obtain from Caroline an avowal of hers, of which he no longer doubted. All his oaths, resolutions,

solutions, and projects disappeared ; all were annihilate ; he forgot that Lindorf had existence : Caroline, only, he beheld ! His Caroline ! To him united, by him beloved, and him loving ; nor was there longer mortal man who should bear away this treasure of his soul !—In an instant, Walstein, again, is in her apartment. He sees her not, but he hears her guittar, hears the melody of sounds that vibrate to his heart ; he approaches, softly, a door, half open, that leads to a small chamber, whither Caroline has retired. It was her favourite apartment ; there she passed an hour, every evening, before she went to bed, reading, singing, or playing. Caroline was half undressed, reclining in an arm chair, and gently touching her guittar as she sang. The air was melancholy, and she seemed deeply affected ;

affected; stopped occasionally, and put her handkerchief up to her eyes; then again continued, with less power, but more passion, in her voice. Walstein thought he had known all her favourite songs, yet this was new to him. He listened with mute attention, earnest to hear the words. Caroline sang so low that he could only catch now and then a line, one of which, however, struck him, and he listened still more eagerly. At last he distinctly heard the following part of a stanza:

Ah! wherefore, Love, or whither fly,
In search of bliss I'd fain impart ?
If thou forsak'st me, how may I
Hope cherish in this bleeding heart ?

The expression, the marked tenderness, with which she sang, were sufficient proofs Caroline's complaint had reference to a real,

real, not an imaginary lover. But who was this lover? Was it Lindorf? Was it Walstein? Diffidence and doubt again possessed his heart; he looks, he listens, and presently the shadowy pleasure of doubt itself vanishes. Caroline laid her guittar in her lap, and untied a black ribband which she always wore around her neck. Till then the Count had supposed it was only an ornament, but he saw with surprise a miniature picture was pendant to it, and which Caroline had always carried concealed in her bosom. Too far off to distinguish the features, he yet could see, as she put it to the candle, that it was the uniform of an officer in the Prussian guards; it was, therefore, the uniform and the portrait of Lindorf! Caroline, at first, fixed her eyes upon it, then pressed it to her heart, and next

*so consider her simplicity and to
her*

to her lips, with extreme passion. The tears ran down her cheeks, and fell upon the picture; she carefully wiped them off, again looked and sighed, laid it on the table, took up her guitar and sang another stanza of the same song, which the Count distinctly heard.

The sole, the sov'reign, balm I find,
Dear emblem of my Love, is thee ;
Thou bear'st his features, but his mind,
Ah ! who shall paint its energy ?
Then wherefore, Love, or whither fly,
In search of bliss I'd fain impart ?
If thou forsak'st me, how may I
Hope cherish in this bleeding heart ?

When she had ended, she once more took up her picture, gave it another kiss, tied it round her neck again, and, as she put it down her bosom, said, with a mix-

ture of tenderness and chagrin, “ thou, however, shalt never forsake me ; ” then, taking up her candle, passed into her bedchamber, after having rung for her attendants, without so much as looking towards the half open door. The action of rising, the removal of Caroline, and the darkness, in which Walstein was left, awakened him from a kind of stupor into which he had sunk ; from a dream of terror, which, as he awoke, instead of vanishing, was confirmed ! All his imagined happiness was fled, and again he was ingulphed in wretchedness at the very instant imagination had conducted him to the ultimate of bliss ! Yet, ever generous, even in the horrors of despair, his first intention was, when he had somewhat recovered himself, to go immediately to Caroline, not to intercede for himself, but to assure her Lindorf,

her

her fugitive, her beloved, should return, should be hers. The arrival of the maids, however, prevented him from executing this his design, and he presently afterwards felt he no longer had the fortitude, personally, to tell her he would for ever yield her to another. His heart palpitated with such violence that such a declaration seemed as if it must have cost him his life, and he even shuddered lest, had he seen her at that moment, instead of acting as friendship and justice required, he, in his delirium, should have suffered passion to invade the rights of love.

No, he would see her no more ! He might not, could not, durst not, see her more ! He still found sufficient virtue to fly, to restore her to liberty, but never to bid

her an eternal adieu ; or again to gaze on those impassioned eyes, the danger of which he had so recently proved. He returned therefore to his chamber, where he passed some hours in a state of undescribable anguish, incapable of determination, of all certitude whether Love or Generosity, Lindorf or Walstein, should prevail. He wrote letter after letter to Caroline : in one he claimed his rights, and endeavoured to move her compassion ; detesting his tyranny, and tearing this, he began another, in which he bad her for ever farewell, without the least mention of his own excruciating pangs. "What," said he, again, with increasing agitation, tearing the paper, "shall she even remain ignorant of the adoration in which I hold her ? Shall I die without so much as exciting her compassion ?"

sion?" He began once more; once more painted his love in all its enthusiasm, and the sacrifice he was about to make in all its horrors. Still less satisfied than ever, he tried anew to write with more moderation; and again and again he tried, and was each time alike unsuccessful.

At length, however, the fatigued and exhausted spirit sank into a gloomy calm, and Walstein came to a firm and irrevocable determination.—This was to go betimes in the morning to the King, who never was in bed long after day-break, and to whom he was never denied admittance, to obtain, immediately, without further let or delay, a divorce; to send it instantly to Caroline, and as instantly to leave Potsdam, retire to his estate at Walstein, and

D 3 there

there make proper preparations for travels which he knew not when he should end. The more he reflected on present circumstances, and the contrary passions by which he supposed himself and Caroline tormented, the more did he persist in this project, and deeply regretted not having put it in execution immediately after his arrival at Berlin; instead of suffering himself to be thus seduced by the fascinating pleasure of living with Caroline. "Long since," said he, "would she then have been easy, and I myself perhaps less wretched; I then should not have known the enchantment of her smiles, the irresistible allurement of her friendship, and the bewitching influence of her attentions: or, at least, I should have known them but in part; attentions which I interpreted into love, and which

which might have supplied its absence, had I remained ignorant that she loves another, over whose memory she in secret mourns.

—Mourn! Does Caroline mourn? Caroline! For whom I would sacrifice a thousand lives! And shall I hesitate then to yield up my happiness?"

The thought was most natural and appealing to the noble heart of Walstein. He wrote, or rather began to write a letter to send Caroline when he should have obtained a divorce. He afterwards wrote also to the High Chamberlain, to give this transaction such a colouring as that he might not impute it to his daughter, or Lindorf. These letters he put in his pocket, and, aided by his valet de chambre, made every necessary preparation for

his travels. As he supposed he was no more to visit Berlin, he passed the rest of the night in putting his papers in order, and collecting certain of them, which he meant to take with him. As soon as day appeared, he set off for Potsdam, where the King then was, and entreated a secret audience.

How, in the mean time, was poor Caroline employed?—She awoke from a sweet sleep, which had calmed her inquietude, and already began to be impatient again to see that dear and cruel husband who thus fled her embraces, and whom she yet had hoped to win by affection and perseverance. Nay, indeed, she had lately flattered herself with success, and that there was very little of the extraordinary

in

in his conduct. He seemed pleased to be with her, seldom left her during the day, and had all those little preventive cares which are so peculiar to love; she often caught him looking passionately at her, and, once, surprised him ardently kissing a ringlet of her hair. What more was necessary to Caroline? Educated in the utmost innocence, without friendship or other conversation than that of the chaste Canones, never having read other books than what she recommended, she was most happy when in the sight and hearing of her husband.—To suppose herself beloved, to pass her life in his company, was bliss supreme; and when he quitted her, at night, her only chagrin was that of being separated from him till the morrow. These, likewise, were the only moments in which

she longer doubted of his love ; " for," said she, " he might stay, if he pleased ; we still could converse a little longer ; or read, or sing, and then, when I awoke in the morning, I should have the dear pleasure of seeing him immediately. For why might he not as well sleep in my chamber as in his own ? Oh ! that I durst but tell him so !— But he does not love so much to be with me as I do to be with him ; he pines not as I do when we are afunder."

Then would Caroline weep without knowing why ; then would she gaze on her little picture, kiss it, repeat those tender things she durst not say to the original, commit it again to her bosom, go to sleep with it, and, on the morrow, when she met
the

the Count, no more remember any thing but the pleasure of being in his presence.

This was nearly her diurnal history; though, on the evening we have been describing, she was more than usually moved by the emotion of the Count; and, particularly, by his sudden retreat, which came so unexpected, and which, by the manner of it, had produced this effect. She, then, began to reflect there was something extremely singular in the conduct of her husband; such frequent inequality of behaviour, so many contradictions, and circumstances she knew not how to explain, raised her attention. Was she beloved, or was she not? To answer this question she endeavoured to recollect every incident that had any relation to Walstein from the

moment after their arrival at Ronebourg.

While thus ruminating, a song she had composed, at the time the Count endeavoured to avoid her, and when she imagined herself hated by him, was recollected, and the recollection affected her ; she sang it, and her tenderness was redoubled. Then it was that the Count had overheard her, unfortunately, as she was ending the song, which was as follows.

When now no longer starting fears,
With boding ills, disturb my peace ;
Now love and duty dry my tears,
And bid my former terrors cease ;
Ah ! where, my Love, or whither fly,
In search of bliss I'd fain impart ?
If thou forsak'st me, how may I
Hope cherish in this bleeding heart ?

Thy

Thy daily sorrow, nightly care,
Each word, each look, to love I gave ;
Love drove away the fiend despair,
And flew to snatch me from the grave.
Then wherefore, now, or whither fly,
In search of bliss I'd fain impart ?
If love forsakes me, how may I
Hope cherish in this bleeding heart ?

But if, deceiv'd, not love had aught
In what so well with love agrees,
To life, ah ! wherefore am I brought,
To perish by a worse disease ?
Ah ! wherefore, Love, or whither fly,
In search of bliss I'd fain impart ?
If thou forsak'st me, how may I
Hope cherish in this bleeding heart ?

The sole, the sov'reign balm I find,
Dear emblem of my Love, is thee ;
Thou bear'st his features, but his mind,
Ah ! who shall paint its energy ?

Then

Then wherefore, Love, or whither fly,
In search of bliss I'd fain impart ?
If thou forsak'st me, how may I
Hope cherish in this bleeding heart ?

Had the Count heard the first stanzas he must have known they related to him ; but the latter, and, especially, the address to the picture, wholly led him into error. His portrait it could not be ; and the energy was the energy of Lindorf, who, flying, thus sacrificed his happiness to his friend.

As to Caroline, having sung, wept, and kissed her picture, she went to bed much relieved and more tranquil. "He loves me," thought she ; "I am sure he loves me ; but he believes he is not beloved. He remembers the repugnance which I so unjustly, so unkindly, shewed on the day of our marriage. And can he suppose I still am unjust

unjust and unkind? But I will undeceive him, will forget my fears, will commit all the secrets of my heart to the bosom of my husband, and prove how totally this forward heart is changed. To-morrow, yes, to-morrow I am determined I will tell him all; tell him every day, and every moment that I adore him, and we then shall see whether he will fly from me thus each evening after supper."

This resolution made her perfectly calm; she slept in peace, had delightful dreams, awaked with the purest sensations of pleasure, and was more than ever determined to execute the project she had conceived on the over night. No more she felt the same fears, the same diffidence of herself. Walstein loves her; she is convinced he loves her. Doubts and recollections of the past

past are the occasion of his continued reserve. Unable any longer to support these, she, with a word, will expel them all. Yes, she will prove to him, by a thousand incidents, that he is the sole object of her affection; that he lives and reigns singly and wholly in her heart. Poor Caroline! That heart of thine, so innocent, so tender, may not contain its transports, while, in this delirium of bliss, thou rememberest it shall no longer have a thought concealed from thy beloved Walstein; from that noble husband to whom thou art indebted for thy life, and to whose happiness this life thou meanest to consecrate. But, ah! that heart not yet knows half it has to suffer!

Timidity is natural to youth, and especially to youth educated as Caroline had been.

been. The superior virtues and wisdom of Walstein commanded a respect which not even the most mild benevolence could wholly obliterate. It was therefore that Caroline had been silent so long ; and even now, determined as she is, she knows not what means are best, how to behave, or what to say ; and the more the moment approaches, the more her embarrassment is increased. Oh ! how does she regret her dear Mamma, who, had she lived, would, long since, have been her faithful interpreter ; the voluntary pledge of her truth and tenderness ! But how might she herself explain them ? Should she write ?— She began, but her emotion was too great, her hand trembled, she could find no expressions that could convey her feelings ; no words were adequate to her ideas ; she could not frame a single phrase—

“ No,”

"No," said she, "it will be better to go, to run to him, to throw myself into his arms, to say—Perhaps I may not say a word, but surely he will understand my silence; surely he will not be able to look at me without imagining what I wish to say; he will pardon me, will dispel my fears; reserve, diffidence, and doubt, shall vanish all; he shall be wholly mine, and I wholly his; the happiest of wives and of women!"

The thought inflames her ardour, she kisses her little portrait to increase her courage, and flies to the apartment of the most beloved of husbands! She enters—But no husband is there! He seems not even there to have slept!—A large trunk, in the midst of the chamber, round which are various other packets, seems to announce a removal,

a removal, or a journey.—Caroline shaketh from head to foot! Scarcely has she strength to ring the bell! A footman appears; tremblingly she asks—“Where is my Lord the Count?”

The footman, surprised at the question, answers, “I thought my Lady had known”—

“Known, what?”

“That my Lord set off betimes this morning.”

“Set off!—God!”—

“William, his valet de chambre, has been up all night, making ready. He has left orders that this trunk and these packets should follow. He does not know where

where my Lord is going, but he believes to England."

"England!—Leave me!"

The footman goes, and Caroline sinks in the first chair she can stagger to; where, for the second time in her life, she feels all the affliction, all the torture of despairing love. A second time sees the man she loves neglect, abandon, fly from her!—But what a difference between the present and the former flight! When, at Rindaw, Lindorf left her, it was necessity, it was virtue, it was her own wish; the separation was a cruel one, but the reflection that she had done her duty was, indeed, the most effective consolation! Beside, she knew she was beloved, and that he who fled partook of all her affliction. Far different

different are her present pangs, which every circumstance but augments. Not a clandestine lover but a beloved husband flies, in whom every hope of future felicity centers. A husband that hates her; or could he abandon her in a manner like this?—

At what a moment too!

“ Oh God! Then when I flew to him with open arms, when I imagined how unspeakable his joy would be; then to depart, without mentioning the least word of his intent, without seeing me once again! This must be hatred, or a most cruel, most unconquerable indifference! Yet, yesterday evening, how did he look at me! With what tenderness did he take my hand, and press it to his heart!—It is true, he repulsed it again with terror, and instantly left me!—For ever left me!—No,

no;

no; it cannot, it shall not be. He is no dissembler. Walstein is not the most barbarous of all human beings.—It is error—The servant is mistaken; he will return; yes, he will, he must; and here will I wait his return.

Scarcely had the poor distressed Caroline indulged this momentary glimpse of hope, which somewhat recovered her sunk spirits, before the footman re-entered, and brought her a packet of papers, sealed up.—“It comes from my Lord, the Count; the courier is this moment arrived from Potsdam.”

Caroline had just sufficient strength to receive it, and, by a sign, bid him retire. And now behold her alone, holding the packet she dares not open. Life or death

Nes

lies there sealed up. It was large, and addressed *to the Countess Caroline, Baroness of Lichtfield, in her Hotel*—It was strange, this; most strange!—“What! will he not call me by his name? God of Heaven! Is it possible?” Her trembling fingers break the seals; and, as the cover is torn, she finds, first, a parchment deed, next, three letters, and, last, an unsealed open paper, on which her eyes are rivetted.

Souls of sympathy, that now with Caroline remain in fearful suspense, imagine a paper, a fatal paper, signed by the king, sealed by the king; imagine a deed, or rather a declaration of divorce, by which *the King consents to the dissolution of the marriage of Edmund Augustus Walstein and Caroline of Lichtfield, decrees it null and void,*

void, and the parties free to contract elsewhere!

Yes, the eyes of Caroline were rivetted, wild, yet shed not a single tear! Thus, a while, she stood: at length, the writings dropped from her hands, a dark cloud enveloped her, a cold sweat overspread her pale face; she sees no more, breathes no more, a universal palpitation seizes her; her last thought is a hope that the hand of death is upon her, and she sinks into insensibility!

Thus did she some time remain; and, when nature began somewhat to revive, she imagined she had been in a fearful dream; but not long did this deception continue: the chamber, the trunks, the letters, the paper were there, witnesses of the reality

of her wretchedness. She looks at the direction of those letters. The first is to her father, the second to Caroline, and is rejected with horror.—“ What can he say, while thus he murders me, while thus he himself dissolves our union?”

She examines the third and what is her surprise! It is directed to the Baron of Lindorf, at Walstein-house, Berlin; and at the bottom of the direction is written, *I conjure Caroline to give this letter, with her own hand, to my friend, the very moment he arrives, which must be soon—“ To Lindorf!”* exclaimed she. “ At his own house! And to me the letter entrusted! Oh God! Oh God! what can be the meaning of this! Lindorf here!—Could he be capable!—Is he the cause of?—Oh! would to God it may be jealousy! How easily shall I be able to prove it groundless!”

Caroline eagerly takes up the rejected letter, addressed to her, opens it, begins to read, and hope revives in her heart. —No! not jealousy, not hatred, not indifference, not resentment, are there; but generosity, delicacy, love; passionate love, tender, excessive, heroic love; and in an instant Caroline passes from the depths of misery to the purest heaven of bliss. “He loves me! He loves me!” said she. “He loves me, and our marriage is not dissolved! Soon shall he know Caroline loves him also; will be his, and his only; will exist for him, with him, by him, and never, while life endures, will leave him more!” Blessed as this letter was, scarcely could she end it, so eager was she to give orders, instantly, to prepare the post chariot; but, while it is preparing, again she reads, again she devours its contents. The

words

words are hosts of angels, and the small
paper the infinite regions of bliss.

“ Dear and tender Caroline, cease to
“ grieve, cease to subdue your feelings;
“ not to a tyrant has the care of your
“ happiness been committed. The tears
“ I have so lately seen fall, on the picture
“ of a regretted lover, shall be the last
“ which for this reason you shall shed—
“ Oh! may my prayers be heard, and
“ may the God of goodness grant, as an
“ ample reward for my own sufferings,
“ that her whom I adore may be hence-
“ forth, and for ever, happy; then shall I,
“ though separate and far, far from her,
“ though knowing her another’s, still be
“ able to support existence. Yes, angel
“ of my soul, be happy; be his whom
“ your heart hath selected, and who merits,

“at least as much as mortal may, a blessing so supreme. No longer shall your sensibility, by virtue tortured, lament a union which your soul abhors; no longer shall you shed those secret and corroding tears, which I would rather perish than be the cause of. Love and duty shall be allied.

“Oh Caroline! still do I hear those moving, those passionate sounds, dictated by grief, and addressed to the object of your tenderness. But complain no more; no more reproach him with an involuntary absence which he to friendship thought he owed. He shall be restored to your arms, Caroline; you shall see him, kneeling at your feet, and presently shall you both forget your former pains.

“Pardon,

“ Pardon, Oh! pardon, Caroline, that
“ I so long have neglected to give you
“ happiness and joy. From the moment
“ that first I learned your secret, that fatal
“ moment when I saw you expiring, when
“ I felt there was a degree of misery su-
“ perior even to that of resigning you, I
“ then swore to unite you to each other.
“ Caroline, thou thyself canst witness how
“ sacred I have held the wife of my friend,
“ the beloved of Lindorf—yet will I own,
“ blinded by my passion, I have had mo-
“ mentary illusions, have thought it possi-
“ ble I might myself be ineffably blessed,
“ have misinterpreted the efforts of duty
“ and virtue into softer sensations, and had
“ almost prepared the iron scourge of
“ never-ending regret for myself, and
“ pining grief and melancholy for
“ thee. But it is past, the charm is

“ broken, and I feel it is time to fly. Yes,
“ in a delirium of hope was I almost lost ;
“ but, with the first rays of returning day,
“ I will depart to obtain what shall for
“ ever banish all such future rash hopes,
“ to which I have too, too, weakly yielded.
“ I go to restore you to yourself ; or, rather,
“ to the original of that picture you hold
“ so dear. Farewell, Caroline ; I perceive
“ I say what I ought not ; I shall give a
“ pang to your generous and tender heart,
“ by exposing the weakness of my own.
“ At length, however, dear Caroline,
“ know me for what I am. Know that,
“ be my misery what it may in quitting
“ you, in renouncing you thus eternally,
“ it still would be infinitely greater were
“ I to remain and usurp those rights which
“ are due to love alone. To possess the
“ person of Caroline, and to know that
“ another

“ another possesses her heart, to be equally
“ an impediment to her happiness and the
“ happiness of a dear and respected friend,
“ this were impossible to support! But to
“ be a spectator of, or, at least, to imagine,
“ your mutual felicity, will spread a gleam
“ of comfort over desponding life. Ca-
“ roline will owe that felicity to me, will
“ think of me with tenderness and grati-
“ tude, and thus, while I live, I shall live
“ certain of her friendship, and when I die
“ she will shed a tear over my tomb.—
“ Farewell!—Caroline, farewell! I fly to
“ merit the friendship I so earnestly covet,

“ Berlin, five o'clock in the morning.

“ P. S. Dated at Potsdam, ten o'clock,
“ and after having had an audience with the
“ King.

“ All is over, the chains which have
“ ever hung so heavy on Caroline are

“ broken. She is free, and shall soon be
“ Lindorf’s. Oh ! tell me, tell me, Ca-
“ roline, that you are happy. Let me have
“ this consolation——My friend is igno-
“ rant of the bliss that awaits him. I know
“ his generous friendship, and the same
“ feelings that drove him from Rindaw,
“ and his country, may, perhaps, still make
“ him refuse this felicity. This must not
“ be : to prevent it I have written a
“ letter, addressed to him, which will end
“ all his scruples, and prove that he only
“ can contribute to the small degree of
“ happiness of which Walstein is now ca-
“ pable, by making himself and Caroline
“ happy.

“ I still have a favour to ask, and, surely,
“ Caroline, in a moment like this, will not,
“ by refusal, increase my griefs. No, I
“ know

“ know her heart too well.—It is to accept
“ the house she at present inhabits. You
“ like its situation, Caroline; your apart-
“ ments please you; they were designed
“ for you, furnished for you, and never
“ shall any one but you inhabit them—
“ You will not, surely you will not, by a
“ cruel denial, make your wretched friend
“ still more wretched.

“ Again and again, farewell! Dear and
“ adored Caroline, farewell!—And is it
“ true, then, that you are no longer mine,
“ that I no longer have the least right?—
“ What talk I of rights, I never had any;
“ those the heart only can accord, and, at
“ present, I shall be certain of your pity
“ and esteem. Ah would you but some-
“ times write to me, would you but de-
“ scribe your happiness—But no, it can-

“ not be: never must I write to the wife of
“ Lindorf. If Caroline of Lichtfield will
“ for once deign to answer me, only once,
“ before she bears another name, her letter
“ will reach me at Walstein, where I shall
“ remain eight days, before I set off to
“ Dresden, to visit my sister.

“ I am going to depart!—And shall I
“ never see you more? Shall those hea-
“ venly hours which, by your side, I have
“ passed, never return? Shall I never more
“ listen to your sweet voice?—Caroline, I
“ rave, for never, while thought remains,
“ will you be absent from my imagination.
“ Whatever hospitable, or inhospitable,
“ land may contain my body, my soul will
“ be ever present with you.

“ Herewith

“ Herewith I send the King’s confirmation of your liberty, a letter to your father, one to—to your husband, and the deed of conveyance of Walstein-house. Let me know, at least, that you have received those papers; let me, once again, entreat you to tell me you are happy, and all the purposes of this world are ended with

“ EDMUND AUGUSTUS WALSTEIN.”

Again this dear letter is read till the chariot is ready, except just for a moment that Caroline runs into her own apartment to fetch the manuscript of Lindorf; the picture, that principal cause of mistake, is warm in her bosom. And now she departs, entreating, conjuring the postillions to be expeditious, and, notwithstanding all their endeavours to oblige so sweet a

E 6 petitioner,

petitioner, still she finds they go but slowly. The Count was some hours before her, and yet, so great was the diligence she used, he had not been very long at Walstein before she arrived. Shut up in his closet, a prey to the most violent grief, insensible of every thing but the loss of Caroline, whom he never was more to behold, dead even to the consolations of virtue, he there had retired from the world, and the sight of human being. A momentary gleam of comfort had come over him when he first was met by his vassals and servants. Louisa, Justin, and the aged Josselin, had been at the head of them, had fallen and clasped the knees of their benefactor, had presented their two little boys, and, with blessings and prayers, and smiles, and tears, had given him salutation. Louisa was pregnant again. "Oh! my Lord," said she,

she, “your arrival is the forerunner of happiness. I shall have a little girl, for which so often I have prayed; and now my Lord is married, if my Lady, the Countess, will but have the goodness to stand Godmother, and let my child be christened after her, I shall never be thankful enough for the favor.”

The grateful Louisa spoke daggers! The Count could not support it.—“Alas! child, I am—I am no longer”—Walstein was obliged to break off abruptly and fly to conceal the bursting efforts of nature.

These good people still were assembled in the court, and with them some of the villagers, who all were lamenting the grief in which they had seen their good lord, when Caroline arrived. She opened the door,

sprang

36 CAROLINE OF

sprang from her chariot, and, without seeing or hearing person or object that surrounded her, exclaimed, “Where is he? Where is the Count?”

William flew!—“Here is my Lady the Countess!”—

“Yes, dear William, here am I! Where is he? Lead me to him instantly!”

William ran before her, pointed to his master’s closet door, and retired. Caroline opens it, runs, falls into his arms, and in a broken voice exclaims, “My Lord! My Husband!—Wherefore hast thou quitted thus thy Caroline, who adores thee, who loves thee and thee only in all the world, and whom thou wilt kill shouldest thou abandon her?”

The

The haste with which she ran, her eagerness, her sobs, all cut speech short and interrupted respiration; her head reclined on the shoulder of the Count, her arms hung round his neck, and her tears fell into his bosom. Walstein was not less agitated than herself; at last, taking her in his arms and placing her on a sopha, he falls at her feet.

“Caroline!—Caroline!—Is it you, Caroline?—Is it, or is it some pitying angel who has assumed your form? Can what I have heard be possible?”

“Doubt it not, doubt it not! Here, here (Caroline untied the ribband and took the portrait from her bosom) look, behold the picture I love; nay, look at it well; say whose likeness it is; behold who thus

entirely possesses my heart, and for whom alone I would live and die!"

Walstein looked!—With astonishment looked!—It was he!—Good God! he himself! At least such as he himself had been; and Caroline proved she still beheld him as he had been, and that, to her, he had undergone no change. True it was, indeed, that he every day became more like his portrait, and that, at present, the likeness even could not be mistaken. But by what magic, what miracle could this portrait, of the existence of which the Count himself was ignorant, fall into the hands of Caroline, be worn next her heart, and become the object of her dearest, her tenderest carefes? He looks, he falters, he is ready to sink under the excess, and yet cannot he believe it real! It is a heavenly dream

dream out of which he fears to awake ! Few are his words, but those few all are expressive of rapture, astonishment, and remaining doubt. As soon as passion would permit, Caroline, blushing, drew from her pocket all the letters and the manuscript which Lindorf had left her—“ Take these,” said she, “ read, and you will know all. No more will I have any secrets for my Walstein ; they have already made me too wretched.—Yes, I loved Lindorf ; at least, I had sensations that bore some resemblance to those I feel at present. What the difference is you yourself shall judge. When Lindorf left me, at Rindaw, I wept ; yes, wept, and not a little ; but my grief soon found alleviation, soon subsided, and soon did this small picture become dearer to my heart than Lindorf. This morning, on the contrary, I wept not, when I received the

fearful

fearful sentence of separation. Not a tear escaped : but I thought either death or distraction must have been the instantaneous effect, and should you persist in that your dreadful design it would be as though you were to say to me *Caroline, I wish thee dead*—But, Oh ! rather say ‘*Caroline, I wish thee mine, and mine thou ever shalt be*’—Here—here is the paper! The—the Divorce! Look how insignificant it is at present !”

It was torn in a thousand pieces, and Caroline cast it with indignation into the fire—Walstein could not utter a word! He gazed, he wept, he took her hand, pressed it to his lips, to his heart—He gazed again, and exclamations, without connection, without meaning, succeeded each other. He took up his own picture, and, in his delirium,

lirium, kissed it with transport ! It was the sacred proof of the affection of his dear Caroline !

Caroline pressed him, once more, to read the manuscript, but this he could not, this would have been to have taken his eyes off her, and have robbed himself of moments the most precious, the most ecstatic the human heart knows.—“ No, dear Caroline, do not, do not ask me to read now. I do read, I read your heart, I there find I am beloved ; and what farther knowledge can I want ?”

“ But you know not the history of the portrait.” “ No matter ; I know it dear to you, and that is all I wish to know.”

“ Nay, but hear, at least, that it was

Lindorf

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Lindorf who taught me to estimate the worth of Walstein ; who first inspired admiration, which was afterward productive of love."

" Lindorf!"

" Yes, let me do him justice ; to Lindorf you are indebted for the heart of your Caroline."

" To Lindorf ! — Generous Friend !"

" To you he owes every thing."

" No, no, I am indebted to him for more than life."

Walstein then took the manuscript and read, and Caroline presently saw the struggling efforts of sensibility ; often was he obliged to stop, and endeavoured to stifle his tears,

tears, and as often did he tell Caroline, with a broken and passionate voice, that Lindorf most merited her affection. Caroline, with her angel hand, stopped his mouth, and obliged him to continue his reading. He passed rapidly over events which were already familiar to his memory, but when he came to the epocha of the first meeting of Lindorf and Caroline, his very soul seemed a part of the paper, each syllable, each phrase was devoured, and he read with his eyes only, for circumstances like these might not be read aloud. Caroline, with fixed looks, continually endeavoured to discover the different sensations by which he was agitated.

When he had ended, he gave her back the manuscript in a manner that shewed how much he had been moved.—“I see,” said

said he, “I have a wife and a friend such as never man had, and that they both have sacrificed their own felicity to mine—Ah! wherefore, Caroline, did you oblige me to read this manuscript? Why not leave me in that blessed dream into which I so lately had been lulled?”

“A dream! Unkind Walstein! Is that an epithet for feelings such as mine? Do you forget that this is your picture?”—The word picture, pronounced with the utmost affection, was convincing, and restored the Count all his confidence and bliss.—“And now” said she, “that you have read your own story, and that of Lindorf, listen to the history of my heart.”

Caroline, then, circumstantially, related all that had passed from the moment of their

their marriage : the innocence with which she supposed she loved Lindorf as a brother and her terror at first imagining him a lover; the scene of the garden, of the pavilion, her grief, her tears, her regret, her struggles, all were told. She next informed him how, induced by esteem and admiration at reading his letters to Lindorf, she had begun to think of him, to look at and love his portrait ; spoke of what she felt on receiving the letter in which he proposed to leave his country, and of the delicacy, the sensations, and the mixture of chagrin that had occasioned her answer. When she came to the court yard of Ronebourg, "I protest, I vow," said she, " it was agitation only at finding myself so unexpectedly in the presence of a husband whom I had so cruelly wronged, and by whom I had so much cause to be hated ; it was not Lin-
dorff.

dorf. No, you long had utterly effaced every impression he had made upon my heart."

The Count listened in rapture. He was enchanted, and took care not to give her the least interruption. With what enthusiasm, what truth, what eloquence, what affection, did she speak ! How did she dwell on every circumstance of her recovery at Ronebourg, of her hopes and fears since their arrival at Berlin, and her continual intention of explaining her feelings ; of the timidity by which she was restrained ; of her desire to please him, to win his affection, to attach him wholly to herself, and make him happy ; of her grief at her ill success, her resolution, that very morning, of speaking, and her extreme affliction at finding him gone ; of her despair at receiving the fatal packet, and

of the joy that succeeded when she was so fully convinced, from his letter, how dearly she was beloved by her husband. All was expressed with that rapidity, that persuasion, that passion, which so entirely remove doubt.

—“At present,” added she, “you are as perfectly acquainted with Caroline as she is with herself; I have nothing more to relate, except to paint how happy I am. Oh! but how? It is wholly impossible! I love, am beloved, and may, without a blush, receive and return all the most endearing proofs of love! Yes, my dear Lord, our hearts are now acquainted with each other. Estimate mine by your own!”

Walstein would have replied, would have entered into explanations concerning his own conduct, but he was interrupted by the arrival of William. He entered, say-

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ing that the villagers, having heard the beauteous lady they had seen was the Countess, were very unwilling to go without being permitted to see her again, and very earnestly entreated she would let them pay their duty to her, if it were but for a moment. Caroline, led by Walstein, descended into the court, and was received with redoubled cries of "*Life! Happiness and long life, to my Lord and my Lady!*" The Count ordered wine and money to be distributed, and Caroline, clasping his hand, most affectionately, whispered, "these good people, my Walstein, know not that they really celebrate our bridal day, the epocha of happiness confirmed!—Would you but permit"—

"Permit, Caroline!—Speak, command!"

before we were disbanded we made

the

"See

“ See what a number of young people here are. Do you not think there are some lovers, among them, who wish to marry, but whom poverty keeps asunder? Ah! let us make them as happy as we are ourselves !”

The Count kissed her hand with transport.—“ Dear, adorable Caroline!—Let us do still more; let us perpetuate the memory of this fortunate day, since it is the day when Caroline is given to my arms. Let us, here, in this scene of bliss, annually, bestow six marriage portions, and do thou, my Caroline, inform the good peasants of the institution.”

Caroline again pressed the hand of Walstein, spoke to the people, and new acclamations, new benedictions were uttered

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with redoubled fervency ; in the midst of these tumultuous transports, the voices of young lovers were still louder and more ardent than the others, and their prayers that God might for ever bless their good Lord and Lady reached the skies !

Walstein, perceiving Louisa and Justin in one corner of the court, with their little family, called, and presented them to Caroline. "Here, my love," said he, "are some good people with whom you are already acquainted." "Ah!" said Caroline, "this is the beauteous Louisa."—Louisa blushed and became more beautiful; for, though childbearing and the duties of her station had somewhat faded the roses on her cheeks, she still was exceedingly handsome.

"Oh !

"Oh! yes, my Lady," said Justin, with his open expressive countenance, which at once bespoke the capacity of his mind and the honesty of his heart: "You are very right; this is my beauteous Louisa: there's not a man in the world, 'tis my opinion, has so handsome a wife, except my Lord the Count; and that is but just. It is the recompense of heaven for having bestowed Louisa on the poor Justin."

It was now Caroline's turn to blush! She caressed the two boys who were fine little fellows, and, perceiving the pregnancy of Louisa, prevented her petition, by offering, of her own accord, to stand godmother to the child. Louisa would have knelt at her feet, if Caroline would have suffered her; but Justin nothing could restrain; he kissed the hem of her robe, and,

rising, said, "Surely God loves me, for he hears and grants me all my prayers ! No sooner did I ask him to give me Louisa than he put it into the heart of my Lord to make her mine ; and then I again begged a Louisa for my Lord, and behold he has found one ! Well then, I next will pray him to grant my Lady two little boys, as handsome as ours ; nay and I have no doubt but they will soon be here."

Caroline turned away, stooped to the children, and gave each of them a kiss and a ducat, while Walstein, affected, shook Justin by the hand, and threw his purse into his hat. To escape thanks and prevent the efforts of gratitude, which, when beyond expression, are always painful, he asked Caroline to walk in the garden, to which she instantly agreed. It was then
the

the month of December, the air was piercing, the earth covered with snow, and the waters with frost, yet neither frost nor snow were seen, nor was the sharp air felt by Caroline and Walstein. Never did walk in spring appear to them so delicious. Long has it been known that love can embellish all things, and that, where the beloved object is present, there is neither winter nor summer, spring nor fall. Indeed, the gardens were remarkable for their beauty, extent, and the taste with which they were disposed; and, as such, were visited by travellers. Caroline had seen something of them, on her other bridal day, and perhaps more than she saw at present, though she now walked all over them. At length, the Count, fearing the effect of the cold, brought her back to the Chateau. Here they found a collation such as the rustic

hoards of Louisa could afford. She had been busy in providing cream, new cheese, chesnuts, honeycombs, and a part of the kid that Justin had killed. "How fortunate it was," said Louisa, "that I had it ready dressed to regale our good old father."

"What Joffelin!" cried Caroline; "nay then, Louisa, you must go and bring him to eat with us." Louisa ran to seek him, and in the Sire came, supported by Justin, and tremulous still more with joy than old age. The Count and Caroline rose, both went to him, and, each taking him by an arm, placed him in a great chair; after which the Count, filling him a bumper, said, "Drink this, my brave Joffelin, to the health of the happiest of mortals!"

"And this," said Justin, "to him who well deserves to be the happiest!"

Joffelin

Joffelin would have spoken, but he was so much affected he could only utter parts of sentences, and raise his hands and eyes to heaven. After, however, having drank a third glass to the health of my lady the Countess, and after a long look at her, he suddenly exclaimed—"Blessed be God for having made so beauteous a Lady purposely for our good Lord! Oh yes! you are beautiful, madam, and very, very good! I can see, I am sure you are; but you have an angel for a husband! Did you know what he has done for us, how he preserved, how he provided for, my Louisa!"

And now the good Joffelin, animated by wine, and having once begun to speak, was not willing to be silent. He recounted the whole history, to Caroline, of the marriage of his daughter; and how he would not hear of Justin, and how my

Lord the Count came round him, and how he gave them a good farm, and fifty ducats down, and how he had the misfortune to wound himself as he went from their house, and how they carried him on hurdles to the Chateau of Ronebourg ; and a thousand other bows which Caroline knew as well as he, yet would she not interrupt him ; the pleasure the old man felt in talking was a pleasure to Caroline ; nay, she even listened with delight to this simple but natural village eloquence ; it flowed pure from the heart and never thought of well-placed words or studied expressions ; and particularly to the praise of Walstein, which was incessantly repeated, and which drew the sweetest tears of sensibility to her eyes. She looked up to this dear, this beloved husband, and saw his heart in sympathy with hers ; she stretched

out

out her hand to him with a soft smile, an expression which no words can convey. Love, virtue, and happiness were united, and this single moment would have been a large compensation for an age of pain.

Josselin drank, talked, and became more and more animated. He spoke of his house, his family, the care his children took of him, of his dear Justin, who was the best of sons, of husbands, and of fathers. "An it were to do again," said he, "I would give him my Louisa if he were not worth a groat. Not, my Lord, that your bounty has done any harm. And then when I see these little urchins, playful, capering round me—Ah! how does it rejoice my very heart! It makes me young again; and, if my dear Cicely were still living, I should be happier now than

ever——But, pray, my Lord, what is become of our master's son, the young Baron of Lindorf? I can remember him less than either of these. Many a time have I had him in my arms: nay, I am his nurse father, and shall always love him. I was told he was going to marry the sister of my Lord, and right glad we were to hear it; for such honourable noble souls ought to marry. Is it true, my Lord? Is he your brother?"

"Not yet," said Caroline, rising, and returning Louisa's youngest boy to his mother, whom, till then, she had held in her lap. Justin and Louisa understood by this it was time to retire, and Louisa hinted as much to her father; but the old man was so happy, in his arm chair, with the Count, the Countess, and the bottle, that he could

by

by no means resolve to leave them. "Let me alone, my child," said he; "it is the happiest day I ever beheld, and, at my time of life, one has not much happiness to lose."—"But we are troublesome, father," said Louisa, "to my Lord the Count." "Not in the least, I tell thee; thou art a foolish girl; I know him better than thou dost; why it is his delight to see others happy; is it not, my Lord? Am not I right, and is not she wrong? But our children, now a days, will be wiser than their fathers."

Walstein smiled, and Caroline again sat down, and made a sign to Louisa; while the old man, more happy than a monarch, began to sing. He could not finish his song. "So it is," said he, "I am good for nothing now; but I have a heart
for

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for all that. Ah! madam, if you had but heard me give the word of command! But come, son Justin, it is now thy turn. Where is thy flageolet? Play madam a tune. Louisa shall sing, and the little apes here shall dance. Pshaw, what simpletons you are, you think of nothing: an it were not for me, here would you leave my Lord and Lady to yawn themselves to sleep."

Caroline having signified she really should be glad to hear Justin play, he took out his flageolet and played some al-lemandes, to which the little ones danced with much more grace and meaning than could have been expected, while their mother watched every motion, and the old man chuckled as he looked at the Count and Countess. "Did not I tell you,"

you," said he, " it was worth your seeing? and now, Louisa, do thou sing the song thy husband made a few days ago."

" How!" cried Caroline; " is Justin a Poet too?"

" No, Madam, no poet." said Justin: " I only write a couplet now and then for my Louisa." He then played a wild pleasing melody, by way of symphony, on his flageolet, and Louisa, with the timid simplicity and sweetness of the village voice, sung as follows.

The marriage honey moon, they say,
Grown languid on the marriage day,
Now scarce, alas! that day outlives;
But, ah! Louisa, thou dost prove
How little such folks know of love,
Who thus describe the joys it gives!

Poor

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Poor silly people! Wherefore tire
Of bliss which I so much admire,
Taste each returning day so pure;
And, feeling how I still adore,
Still each returning day am more
Convinc'd it ever shall endure?

I hear of kings and mighty men,
I know no kings, and, therefore, can
No fancies form of kingly joys;
But this I know, not lands or towns,
No, I'd not give for globes or crowns
My dear Louisa and my boys.

Louisa ended, and Justin laid down his
flageolet. He had supposed it possible
that, as he himself loved so much to hear
his Louisa sing, others might wish to hear
her sing likewise; foreseeing, therefore, this
occasion, and overflowing with gratitude
at the return of his Lord, while the Count
and Caroline had walked into the garden,
Justin, anxious to make this gratitude
known,

known, had composed the following stanza, which, modestly advancing a few steps, he himself now sung.

Ah ! might my artless song but show
How much to my kind Lord I owe ;
Might I but half I feel impart ;
I then, to all my former store,
Should add one grateful pleasure more,
And ease my now half bursting heart.

Justin sung with as much feeling as he wrote, and the Count and Caroline, affected and astonished at his talents, gave him all the praise he merited. The modest and the simple Justin said it was Louisa who had taught him every thing, for had it not been for the pleasure he took in pleasing her he should have known nothing. "But," said Caroline, "have you composed this last stanza instantly, and without having thought on it before?"—

"Not

"Not entirely," replied Justin; "though I do think, my Lady, I could undertake, ay and perform too, a more difficult thing for my Lord the Count."

The heart of Caroline was full, or rather overflowing. During the song, the good Josselin had fallen asleep, but his children awaked him sufficiently to get him away, and as soon as Caroline was alone with the Count she gave vent to the sweetest tears she had ever shed. The old man, the happy couple, the veneration and love they all had for the Count, which extended itself to her, had all together such an effect upon her feelings, and imagination, that her husband appeared a supernatural being, a benevolent Deity, whom it was her duty to adore, and whom, in reality, adore she did. As soon as her mind was a little calm, "permit me, my dear Lord," said she, "to ask you

you the same question that Josselin asked some time since. Will not Lindorf become our brother?"

"Would to Heaven he might," answered the Count; "but you forget, my love" —

"What?"

"That it is not Matilda, now, who could make Lindorf happy."

"And why not?"

"Because, for some months, he was in love with Caroline of Lichtfield."

"But that Caroline no longer exists; he will never see her more; in her stead he will find Caroline of Walstein, who never can inspire any thing but fraternal friendship,

ship, which cannot any way impede his love for Matilda. Let him but see her, once again, and he himself will not be able to comprehend how he might, for a moment, forget her. I wish I were certain that Matilda's affections have undergone no change; there is a word in one of your letters which gave me a little uneasiness. Do you suspect she does not love Lindorf, and that the Baron de Zastrow"—Walstein smiled, pressed the hand of Caroline, and interrupted her by taking out his pocket book and giving Caroline the last letter he had received from Matilda to read—And, Oh! how much affected was she as she read! How often did she repeat, "Dear girl! Charming Matilda! Lovely Sister! Yes, thou shalt live with us, shalt regain thy lover, thy brother, and the tenderest of friends. But why," added she, as she returned the letter

letter to the Count, "did not you, my Lord, immediately fly to Dresden, to give aid and ease to this dear Sister?"

"I will tell you why, my love—My Caroline was dying, and while she was in danger could I leave her?"

"Well, but you answered Matilda's letter?"

"I did; though, at present, I wish I had not; and confess I begin to be uneasy at her silence."

"Good Heaven! How you must have grieved her! Dear Matilda!"—Then, suddenly rising, Caroline, with clasped hands and ardent impetuosity, went up to the Count, and, with a tone of most earnest supplication, added, "My dear, dear Lord, let me beg, let me conjure you, not

to

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to refuse me the favour I am about to ask.
Let us depart to-morrow morning for Dresden, to relieve Matilda; I burn to be acquainted, to live with her, to give her consolation, and, I hope, happiness. Only read her letter again, and you cannot have the least hesitation. She is now, perhaps, in tears, is this moment in distress, when I am so happy; and I myself am the cause of her affliction! And have I, then, dear Matilda, have I robbed thee of thy lover, and deprived thee of thy brother? Oh! how many wrongs have I done thee! No, no, never, never shall I be truly at ease, till I see thee as blest as I myself am." Caroline spoke with so much energy, her eyes and features expressed so well her sensations, and she herself was so beautiful, that Walstein fell involuntarily on his knee before her, where he long remained with

his lips fixed on her hand, without the power to answer a word—" Tell me, my Lord," added she, with earnestness, " shall we, are we to depart to-morrow?"

" Lovely, adorable Caroline!" cried the Count, " how well thou knowest my heart! My absence from my sister, and the apprehension that she may be unhappy, were the only things that could possibly interrupt my present felicity; but to leave you, Caroline, or to propose a journey in the depth of winter, and during such severe weather, was more than I could undertake."

" Nay, my Lord, now you surely joke. I thought it was always fine weather when one went in search of a friend in the company of a lover. We shall pass through Potsdam: shall you see the King?"

" By

" By all means, my love ; it is a duty I cannot neglect ; and, if I might venture, I would ask, in my turn, whether Caroline would " — Caroline perfectly understood the Count, and blushed ; she had not seen the King since the day of her nuptials, which was now above a year ; and, feeling how much cause he had to be dissatisfied with her conduct, she trembled at the thought of being presented. While she was last at Berlin, her mourning and her health were sufficient pretexts to obtain delay, and the Count, we have seen, had his reasons for wishing to indulge her in this delay. At present, he perceived her inquietude, and stopped short ; but she, immediately recovering herself, answered, with an enchanting smile, " It is high time, my Lord, is it not, I should no longer remain so childish ? — Well, lead me, take me to him ; I will kneel at his feet ; I suppose

suppose he will scold me ; he will do very right ; for I have well deserved his anger ; but, when he has ended, I, however, will scold him in my turn."

" You ! my angel."

" Yes, I ; and very severely, too, for having signed that dreadful paper, this morning."

Each word Caroline uttered transported the Count with happiness and love, even to intoxication, dispelling every shadow of remaining doubt, if doubt might remain after the frank and natural manner in which she had spoken of Lindorf, and her desire to see him and Matilda united. But, no, Walstein had no doubts ; the ingenuous and affectionate Caroline knew not diffi-

mulation; she expressed her feelings too forcibly, and with a conviction that deceit cannot assume. Had she been silent, indeed, her eyes, her smiles, the pleasure painted in her countenance, would all have spoken: her lips knew not falsehood, and her features were the organs of a pure and angelic soul. When Caroline said *I love*, no protestations, no vows, were wanting; and this she had said so often, during the course of that fortunate, that blissful day, that the Count might well remain persuaded of her truth.—They supped on the kid that Justin had killed so a-propos; for the Count, when he set off in the morning, was too deeply afflicted to think of food; and this simple repast was the most delicious either of them had ever made. Our history does not inform us whether long habit made the Count, as usual,

usual, leave Caroline's apartment after supper; the reader must, therefore, suppose what he pleases on that subject: but, in the morning, Caroline made the Count promise they should soon return to this charming estate; "for," added she, with a softened voice and downcast eyes, "I shall love it as long as I live!"

In proportion as they drew near to Potsdam, the fears of Caroline augmented; this the Count perceived, and endeavoured to inspire her with fortitude. He related a thousand traits of the King's goodness to him, "who," said he, "is more than my King, he is my friend. Yes, dear Caroline, it is to my friend I am going to present one who will make life a continued dream of felicity, and one whom I received from himself. Had you heard him yesterday morning, how long he persisted to refuse the

cruel favour I came to beg, and when, at last, he yielded to my persecutions and signed that fatal paper, had you seen him return it to me, you would have no fears. “ Reflect, think again, dear Walstein,” said he. “ I am truly grieved at your determination. I wished to make you happy, and still I think you might be so; it is with infinite regret I have signed the paper, and I sincerely hope you will make no use of it.” Such, Caroline, is the monarch who soon is to be a witness of the felicity of his friend.”

By this time they were in the court of the palace, and the Count, alighting, left Caroline in the carriage. The King, according to his custom, was mounting his horse to ride round the fort and exercise his troops. He perceived Walstein and stopped—“ Ah! are you there, Count?”

said

said he; “I am glad to see you; I thought of you all yesterday, and, though I saw the High Chamberlain, did not mention a word of what has passed. Do not be rash, let me, myself, speak to Caroline. I scarcely can consent”——

“ My gracious Sovereign, she is here!”

“ Who?”

“ Caroline! My wife! My lovely, my adored wife! The wife your Majesty bestowed on me, and who is now more beloved, more dear than ever!”

“ Are you in your senses, Walstein?”

“ Perfectly, Sir; it was yesterday morning that I was frantic; but Caroline has restored me to reason, life, and bliss! She

loves me, wishes to be mine, and once more I throw myself at your Majesty's feet to beg her as the greatest of all blessings your royal bounty could grant!"

Yes, the Count was kneeling to the King; who, himself, not perfectly understanding how a woman might be the cause of all this delirium, laughed, bade him "rise and explain." The Count obeyed; related the despair of Caroline, her arrival at Walstein, their present intended journey to Dresden, for which he now asked the King's permission, and, afterwards, earnestly entreated his Majesty's confirmation of their union before their departure. Both were willingly granted, and the Monarch himself went up to Caroline, who was still waiting in her carriage till the Count's return. She was a great deal affected at seeing the King approach, and would have descended

descended from the coach, but the King said to her, "Stay where you are, Lady Walstein, stay where you are; all is well; forget what is past. I am satisfied, live happy, and let me have as many subjects as possible like yourselves. Walstein, make no delay, depart, return as soon as you can, and bring with you the lovely Matilda." His Majesty then took the Count by the hand, saluted Caroline, and left them both exceedingly moved by his benevolent condescension, a favor Kings are so seldom disposed to bestow. They set off immediately for Berlin, made preparations for their journey, and were soon on their road to Dresden, anticipating the mutual pleasure the meeting with Matilda would occasion. The Count foresaw many difficulties which might arise from his aunt and young de Zastrow, but was determined

mined to overcome them all, and bring Matilda to Berlin. He concealed his fears from Caroline, whose hopes ran high and happiness was great, in thinking she should gain a sister and a friend. We have before related how desirous she was of a blessing so necessary and so precious; and to have the sister of Walstein for this friend, with whom she might converse, while he was absent, of all her past and present feelings, certain of being heard with an interest almost equal to her own, was to double this blessing.

To love is not sufficient; friendship, to whom love may unbosom itself, is also necessary; and Caroline, already, felt the delicious transports of telling Matilda how dearly she loved her brother. In this their impatience, for the Count was as desirous

as

as Caroline of being at Dresden, they travelled the two first days with all possible speed, making no stay, by day, except to change horses, and at night only taking two or three hours repose. But the strength of Caroline by no means equalled her wishes, and the second evening she found herself so fatigued she was obliged, when they came to a small village, to entreat the Count would go no farther that night. Walstein, it may well be supposed, readily consented; but, suspecting the accommodations would not be very good, he sent a servant before to procure a bed. At last, they were met, at the end of the village, by the servant, and the landlord of a small, indifferent inn. Our host, judging, by the attendants, his guests were great people, and fearing to lose the promised harvest, came himself, to make it

the more secure. He had only two bed-chambers, each with two beds, and both these were in the possession of a young gentleman and his lady, who had arrived the evening before. The husband had a wound in his arm, which, by the motion of the carriage, had been opened; and this was likely to detain him some days longer; for which reason, to make certain of the two chambers, he had paid for them beforehand. This, however, did not much embarrass our host, who was a merry, unpolished, country fellow.

"I warrant me," said he, "they will let you have one of the chambers, for what occasion have they for two? They are so loving, and so handsome, that they are never asunder all day; and why may they not as well be together all night? No, no; they will not be vexed at that."

The

The host kept talking till they came to the inn, but the Count, however, thought it necessary to go himself, and entreat the strangers to suffer the Countess to lie in one of the beds. Meanwhile the hostess shewed Caroline into her own chamber. The Count went up a dark stair-case, and wanted the landlord to introduce him; but he, little used to the forms of good breeding, led him into a kind of entry, at the far end of which was a door open, and, telling the Count he would find them there, left him to introduce himself.

Walstein advanced, and saw a young lady, at the farther part of the chamber, elegantly dressed, and tying a black scarf round the neck of a young gentleman, so as to support his arm. As her white and charming hand passed his cheek he em-

ployed his other arm to seize and kiss it with rapture. The picture was interesting, and the Count durst not disturb the young couple, whom he silently beheld, remembering his own happiness. Fearing to be thought rude, after standing a moment, he was going to retire; but the young lady, happening to look towards the door, saw him, gazed for a moment, flew to him with open arms, and, with astonishment in her countenance, exclaimed, "It is my brother! my dear dear brother!"

Lindorf (Yes! it was Lindorf himself!) forgot his wound, and instantly rose—
"Heavens! Is it possible! Can it be Walstein?"—Walstein it was, and Lindorf pressed him to his bosom; while Matilda, hanging round his neck, kissed and kissed, and knew not whether to weep or dance for joy.

Need

Need we say the Count was astonished?—Matilda and Lindorf! His sister and his friend both in his arms! Had his senses refused belief his heart would have convinced him it was truth; and, though unable to comprehend by what miracle he might find two such people in such a place, he, nevertheless, yielded to all the transport the prodigy inspired. For some time, Lindorf! Matilda! Brother! Sister! Friend! Interjections and exclamations only were uttered, only were heard—The Count added the name of Caroline, and, at length, said, “she is here, dear Matilda, here, with me, let us go to her.”

“Here! Caroline here! My sister here!” cried Matilda.

Light and swift as the young greyhound at his returning master’s voice, Matilda flies down stairs and already is in the arms

of

of Caroline, who, presently, knew her; more, indeed, from her affectionate caresses, and the repeated epithet of "dear dear sister," than from the portrait of Lindorf. The gentlemen followed, and the surprise of Caroline increased; but surprise and pleasure of the purest nature were her only sensations. Lindorf is her brother, and her friend, and she hesitates not to kiss him with that frank and natural tenderness by which true and simple friendship so well is characterized. "And may I, then, call you brother?" said she; "may I tell you I love you? Oh! yes, I know not how much I shall love the husband of my dear Matilda, and the friend of my dear, dear, dear Walstein!"

This open ingenuous manner would have taught Lindorf, had he himself been insensible of, his duty. He certainly feared

to

to meet Caroline: the scenes that had so lately passed could not be totally obliterated from his imagination; but the manner in which she received him, the tone of voice in which she uttered those few words, in the presence of Walstein and Matilda, wholly deprived him of all dread, either of himself or her. He was surprised to find that the redoubted Caroline was no more than the wife of his friend, and the sister of Matilda; and for whom he felt no sensations beyond these tranquil and legitimate bounds—"Yes," answered he, with fortitude and enthusiasm, "yes, Caroline, I am your brother, your friend, the friend of Walstein, and I feel myself worthy of these titles, which are become so dear, so inestimable!" Then, seizing the hand of Matilda—"Dear Count," said he, "you invited me to return, and promised me happiness. Here, as the ultimate happiness

piness to which I aspire, let me receive this hand, which once was promised me from my Walstein : I think my future life will prove I know its value."

The Count was not long in considering an answer, and his reply was accompanied with an earnest wish to hear what strange circumstances had united them ; if they were yet married ; what had occasioned the wound of Lindorf ; where they were going, whence they came ; and, in fine, the full explanation of what, at present, seemed so wholly enigmatical. We are not without our hopes that the reader, in some degree, participates the Count's curiosity ; and that he now imagines himself in the rustic chamber of a rustic inn, in company with four persons, the most happy the earth contained, feeling all that love and sweet friendship can feel, seated round an antique chimney,

chimney, speaking all at once, and each asking a thousand questions without waiting for a single reply.

And now behold the lovely Matilda weeping and laughing both at once, kissing her brother, embracing Caroline, holding out one hand to her dear Lindorf, and then, suddenly, with a mighty grave face, and serious tone, commanding silence! “Yes, silence! For one full quarter of an hour, I impose silence on you all,” said she, seating herself erect; “for, I assure you, I am not a little vain of having a story to relate. It is almost as singular,” said she to her brother, “as the fine tales you used to tell me when I was a very little, little girl.”—Silence being thus obtained, and the eyes of the company fixed on Matilda, she, addressing herself to the Count, thus began.

“ There

"There was a bird-catcher"—

"A bird-catcher!" exclaimed they all at once.

"Yes, a bird-catcher," replied she, with great gravity. "Before I begin my history I first intend to relate a little fable and put a question to my brother. Do not be impatient, I shall soon have done—There was once a bird-catcher who, by his tricks and artifices, enticed a poor little bird into his nets. Ah! how wretched was that poor little bird! How did it beat its wings in its confinement, and call all its friends to its assistance! But the bird-catcher took care not one of them should hear its cries. At last came a linnet, and flew round the net in which it was entangled. 'Poor little bird,' said the linnet, 'thou wouldest lament still

still louder if thou knewst all the mischief that awaits thee. To-morrow they will clip thy wings, for ever deprive thee of thy liberty, shut thee up in a cage with a bird thou dost not love, and for ever prevent thy meeting the mate thou hast left at freedom in the groves." Then did the little bird, at hearing this, cry still louder; and the linnet was so moved that it said, "Let us try if there are no means to save thee." Whereupon they both began to peck at the threads of the net, and, crack, by and by, one of them was broken; so that the little bird got first its head out, next one of its wings, at last both, spread them, vaulted aloft in air, and flew, right joyous, again to find its friends and former happiness.

"And now tell me, dear brother, whether

ther was the bird-catcher, who thus tried to deprive the poor little bird of its liberty, or the poor little bird, that endeavoured to regain this liberty, wrong?"

"The bird-catcher," my 'dear girl, cried the Count, enchanted at the art, simplicity, and grace, she had mingled in her apostrophe. "The charming little bird will never be wrong if it appeals to me; for I am certain my heart will approve what even my reason may condemn."

Matilda, instantly, clasped the neck of Walstein, and, with tears of joy, exclaimed, "I have found my brother; he is still the same, ever benevolent and ever good, and I no longer dread either his reproaches or my own. Surely, I did right in quitting those malicious people who made me doubt his friendship."

"Doubt

"Doubt my friendship! Dear Matilda, let me beg you to explain your meaning."

"Yes," continued she, with vivacity, "they have had the cruelty to say, nay even to prove, you no longer loved me, wrote to me no longer, and would see me no more: that you forbad me to think of Lindorf, commanded me to marry the Baron de Zastrow, had departed for Russia, and, in fact, that I had no longer any brother, for it was the same thing."

Matilda could not proceed, and the tears ran down her lovely rosy cheeks; yet, while she wept she smiled: it was a summer shower which refreshes nature and inspires new pleasure.

"What a child am I!" said she; "I knew

knew it was all false; I enjoy your company, here you are, you love me, and yet you see the supposition makes me weep; but no, I will laugh; and now—there, now will I relate the full and whole history of the poor little bird."

Before she began, the Count asked several questions concerning what they had told her against him, and found his aunt had intercepted and concealed the letter in which he had promised his sister soon to come to Dresden, and set her free. She managed so as to make Matilda believe the Count had written to her, his aunt. His wish that she might marry the Baron de Zastrow was changed into a positive command, and the voyage of Lindorf into England was a love affair, and a project of marriage with an English lady. The letter of

the Count, instead of Ronebourg, was dated at Petersburg; and the innocent Matilda, being shewn her brother's handwriting, was the dupe of all these artifices. The arrival of the Count, it is true, would soon undeceive her; but they hoped to have Matilda married before that happened, and, since the Count had wished, he certainly would easily be brought to pardon the marriage.

Had Matilda been of a less determined character her aunt would, no doubt, have obtained her end; but she found an opposition, a fortitude which nothing could shake. It seemed inconceivable to young de Zastrow; for never, till then, had he supposed it possible to resist the elegance, the graces, and the charms he had acquired in his travels: A year's residence

at

at Paris, his acquaintance with certain noble and fashionable gamesters there, and his success with actresses, who had made most heavy demands on his purse, had so fully convinced him of his irresistible merit, that he had imagined nothing more was necessary, in order to conquer, than to appear. To his aunt he left the care of courtship, and thought Matilda had every right to yield when he had declared, upon his honour, she was as handsome as an angel; that her shape was quite charming; that there was something of a French cast in her countenance; that she was almost as desirable as Mademoiselle du Thé, of the *Opéra* house; that she sung nearly as well as Mademoiselle du Gazon, of the *Théâtre Italien*; and that, when she was his wife, he would incontinently take her to Paris, where there was no doubt but she would

strike.

strike. All which he said looking at himself in the glass, admiring his leg, displaying the brilliant on his finger, and, occasionally, interrupting himself to expatiate on the merits of certain fashionable bau-bles he had brought from France.

"Such," said Matilda, "is the being with whom my aunt is so enraptured ; to whom she was determined to marry me ; and of whose person, wit, and passion, she was continually vaunting. I own that, for my part, I could see nothing but a very fair complexioned, very mincing, very delicate, very vain, very self-sufficient young gentleman ; who loved only one person in the whole world, himself, and who only did me the honour to think of me because I was the sister of the King's favourite, and the heiress of Madam de Zastrow. I by

no means endeavoured to conceal my thoughts, concerning either him or Lindorf, from my aunt; she well knew I disliked the one as much as I loved the other, and her whole endeavour was to make me reverse this manner of thinking.—“ You see,” said she, “ your brother has changed his opinion.”—“ Yes, madam,” answered I, “ but his opinion has not changed my heart.”—“ Your Lindorf no longer loves you”—“ And must I punish myself for his infidelity ?”—“ You will never see him again.”—“ I may love him, nevertheless, and keep my promise.”—“ But his inconstancy releases you”—“ Not in the least; his inconstancy releases himself, but if I am not inconstant is that my fault ? Or can he, or you, or I myself, or any other being in the world, make me forget to love him and teach me to love another ?” (What did Lindorf feel as thus Matilda spoke ?)

“ These

" These conversations usually ended in ill-humour. I was, by turns, scolded, caressed, flattered, and menaced ; and, notwithstanding all my firmness, was almost driven to despair. At length, I determined to write ; not to you, brother, for I supposed you still in Russia, and they might have married me again and again before I could receive your answer ; beside I was somewhat piqued at your neglect and silence ; therefore, I say, once more, 'not to you but — to Lindorf I wrote.'"

" To Lindorf ! In England ! How did you know his address ?"

" Know ! I knew not, perfectly, if he were there ; for I sometimes would flatter myself they had been telling me falsehoods ; though many circumstances led me to

think he was, and I wrote. Writing was a momentary ease and consolation, and, though my letter remained in my pocket-book after it was written, I still imagined myself less unhappy. I had some small hopes of discovering if Lindorf really were in England, and, perhaps, of remitting him this letter, and you shall hear on what these hopes were founded.

" When I arrived at Dresden, Mademoiselle de Manteul, an amiable girl, but somewhat older than I, had been exceedingly polite to me, and the intimacy of the family at my aunt's occasioned me to see her often. She long had lost her mother, and lived with an old gouty father and younger brother ; therefore, enjoyed a liberty which rendered her house and acquaintance exceedingly agreeable, and she
was,

was, continually, either with me or inviting me to visit her.

" Flattered by the friendship of a young lady of five and twenty, I returned her politeness, and we became as familiar as circumstances would permit. Somewhat timid, on account of the difference of our age, which she, however, endeavoured to make me forget, I, though most desirous of a confidante, durst not tell her the secret of my heart. She had a kind of—of forwardness in her manner, owing to her education, and was, likewise, most intimate with my aunt, to whom she assiduously paid her court ; beside which she had an evident partiality in favour of the Baron de Zastrow, so that I feared making an additional enemy, instead of a friend. I could with much greater ease have confided my

thoughts to her brother, whose age was nearer my own, and whose mild yet manly character might render him more indulgent ; but he, also, was the friend of the young Baron, and, indeed, rather seemed to avoid than to seek being alone with me, and it was not long before he informed us he was going to travel for some years.

"Oh ! how did my heart palpitate when I heard England was to be the first country he visited ! How then did I wish to tell him my secret, entreat him to seek out Lindorf, and conjure him to take charge of my letter ! But no opportunity could I find. He was too busy in preparing for his departure, and seemed sorrowful at being obliged to leave Dresden and his family. I seldom saw him, and, when I did, found myself abashed. If ever I approached,

with

with intent to speak of his voyage to England, and to add a word relative to what lay nearest to my heart, I trembled, knew not what to say, and remained silent; blushing as if I had spoken, or as if the whole world had read my thoughts. Mademoiselle de Manteul was generally a third person, and, seeing my embarrassment, increased it by her pleasantries.

"At length, this brother departed, while I still was seeking the means to induce him to take my letter and give it to Lindorf; and I was left in the utmost despair at having missed so favourable an opportunity.

"One resource still remained; my friend might send it to her brother. But then it was necessary to make a full confession, and

interest her in the success of my passion. The better to lead to this I continually spoke of England, her brother, the letters she would receive from him, and the dear pleasure of having a correspondence with a person one loves, though I yet had not dared to pronounce the name of Lindorf. She came to me one morning, and threw a letter into my lap. "There," said she; "you who think it so sweet a pleasure to receive letters; I make you a present of that, which, indeed, ought to have been addressed to you; for my brother, though he has written to me, has spoken only of you."

"Of me!"

"Yes, of you, little witch. You are the cause of his absence, you have robbed me
of

of my brother ; read, read, and return it quickly."

" Nothing of what this meant could I comprehend ; but, beginning to read, was soon better instructed. The poor youth had spoken to his sister of sentiments which I neither suspected nor could return, and for which I was much afflicted, and, therefore, would not have read beyond the first page. But, Oh ! what a pleasure was I about to deprive myself of ! My friend obliged me to go on, and I turned over with vexation and sorrow. Scarcely had I cast my eyes on the second page before I saw, at the bottom, a name !—a name !—Oh ! how instantly did grief give way to pleasure, to joys the most ecstatic ! It was the name so dear to my heart, so ever present to my thoughts ; yes, it was the name

of Lindorf; *the Baron of Lindorf, Captain of the Guards.*

" No deception is there; it is he, he himself, and already have I read every syllable, have uttered a hundred exclamations, have pressed the letter to my lips, to my bosom, and have wept and laughed as if I had had no witness of my raptures, folly, and frenzy. Looking up, however, and seeing the astonished air of Mademoiselle de Manteul, I ran into her arms, and hid my emotion in her bosom. Gently raising, she asked me what it meant.

" Matilda!" said she; " my dear Matilda! Why are you thus overjoyed? What is it that thus can agitate you?"

" Ah! read, read—read yourself," said I, pointing to a certain passage in the letter;

letter ; " this will be my explanation ; " and while she read, again I hid my face in her bosom.

" I have had the happiness," said M. de Manteul to his sister, " to meet with the Baron of Lindorf, at Hamburg, a captain of the Prussian guards, and hope we shall become intimate friends. We have been shipmates together, and lodge in the same house. We are seldom asunder, our tempers and dispositions accord wonderfully, for he, like me, is melancholy, apt to be absent, and regards his country. Without being his confidant, I dare pronounce his heart is not more free than mine."

" Ah ! " exclaimed I, raising my head and joining my hands, " it is not true,

then, that he loves an English lady, or that he has been six months married ! My heart told me it was not !”

“ But who, who are you speaking of ? Do you know this Baron of Lindorf ? ”

“ Do I know him ! ”

“ Ay, do you know him ? Do you love him ? ”

“ Love him ! Better than life ! Beyond all thought ! ”

“ And thus, from question to question, Mademoiselle de Manteul became the confidante of all my secrets, and fully informed of my situation. I related your friendship, my dear brother, with Lindorf,

dorf, and your desire to see us united, but, as one must always reserve a little of one's wealth for one's self, I did not tell her that you had changed your opinion; though I let her know my doubts and fears concerning Lindorf, which her silence seemed to confirm. Yet was it possible, and I endeavoured to persuade myself it was true, that the difficulty of conveying his letters to me was the reason why I received none. My brother was no longer in his interest; he, no doubt, knew it, and that melancholy, that *absent air*, his regrets for his country, and his *enslaved heart*, had each made its impression, and re-animated all my hopes.

"My friend had listened with an evident concern, and, when I had ended, affectionately kissing me, said, "My poor,

dear

dear Matilda, why did you not tell me all this sooner? How great would have been the pleasure of the confidence you have refused me!"

"I feared lest you should take the part of young de Zastrow."

"Me! Oh, no!—So far from that I perfectly approve your resistance, and am only afraid lest you should yield at last."

"Never! Never!—While I live, never will I love man but Lindorf!"

"Add, also, none other you ought to love; for, in reality, you are as much betrothed as if actually married, and to espouse another would be guilt, perjury."

"It

"It would, it would!" they have called
Lindorf, and I have written now

"But what is Lindorf doing in Eng-
land?" you begin to wonder on to

the quiet streets and porches, I

"Alas! I know not; cannot com-
prehend. I have not heard from him these
six months!"

"And why do you not write?"

"I have written."

"And where is your letter?"

"In my pocket-book."

"Mademoiselle de Manteul burst into
a laugh. "It must produce wonderful
effects," said she, "while it remains there.
Oh! what a child you are! Give me your
letter,

letter, and your lover shall have it in a week."—How did I kiss Mademoiselle de Manteul!—And yet her brother's love of me somewhat damped my joy; though I admired his sister's goodness, thus to sacrifice his interests to mine. I was even fearful of abusing it, and shewed some hesitation.—"The task," said she, "I own, is a little cruel; but we must cure him, and this I think will be an infallible means. Give me the letter."—And soon the letter was taken from my pocket-book and in her hand: It was sealed.—"You positively promise, my friend," said she, as she received it, "to be only Lindorf's; never to marry de Zastrow?"

"Positively! Positively!"

"Very well, that will set my conscience at ease; for I now shall be serving a persecuted,

secuted, married pair. Leave the management of every thing to me. We must gain time till you can receive an answer, and take care to leave me with the young Baron as often as possible. I will flatter and coax him, and thus relieve you from the pain of practising deceit."

"Oh! I cannot deceive. I have always told him, and always shall tell him, I will love none but Lindorf."

"And what is his answer?"

"That he has no faith in eternal constancy."

"He has not! I understand him. But we will prove what women are capable of; shall we not, my dear Matilda?"

"I most

"I most sincerely promised we would, and left her, more than ever determined on unshaken constancy and resistance."

Walstein here smiled, and whispered something to Lindorf, which the latter returned with like significance. The ladies, and especially Matilda, desired to know what they said.—"Oh! I promise you, you shall know by and by; but go on, my dear girl, with your story. You were telling us of the tender friendship of Mademoiselle *de Manteul*."—"I was," replied Matilda, with ardour; "and never, perhaps, was friendship like hers; as you would have said, had you heard her speak, seen her eagerness, and her zeal. You would have supposed the secret hers, and that her happiness, not mine, was at stake. Every means did she take

to

to increase my fortitude. I might, perhaps, have suspected myself; but my friend was five and twenty, was therefore prudent, and, certainly, would not give me ill counsel. Determined, therefore, with all possible obstinacy, not to yield, I waited, but not with dread, for the answer of Lindorf; persuaded he would tell me truth, and, if I found I was no longer beloved, my resolution was taken.

"Why, what would you have done?" said Caroline, with vivacity.

"Every thing I could to have forgotten him; but, at the same time, have kept the vow I made, never to marry, never to trust a perfidious sex, capable of loving twice."

This

This was very innocently said, but it was a dagger to the feeling heart of Caroline. She blushed excessively, cast her fine eyes on the ground, half looked up at Walstein, and, as instantly, again, looked down. He saw her charming confusion, enjoyed it for a moment, tenderly kissed her hand, then, addressing himself to Lindorf, said, " You, my friend, no doubt, approve Matilda's mode of thinking, and, perhaps, you are right; but each person has his opinion. I think nothing can be more flattering than to be the second object of the attachment of a delicate and tender heart; and I should think this attachment more durable, and more certain, than that of a heart that never had occasion to suspect and be aware of itself."

" How!"

"How!" exclaimed Matilda; "does my brother Walstein preach inconstancy?"

"I do not think a second passion deserves the name, and I only admit of being twice in love."

"Aha! No oftener?"

"No, certainly; no oftener;" said Caroline, faintly, and pressing the hand of Walstein to her bosom.

"Well, for my part," replied Matilda; "I find the first time once too often, and that women are very silly creatures ever to love, since love has so many pangs for them and so few for the men. Here was this good gentleman amusing himself, in all tranquillity, at London, while

while I was scoffed, persecuted, and despairing from morning till night—(Lindorf with a look petitioned mercy; Matilda smiled and continued.)—I found myself, however, much less unhappy since I had gained a friend, to whom I might tell all my griefs; and this friend was so kind, understood so well all my feelings, approved so highly of my love and constancy, and spoke so well of Lindorf, and so ill of de Zastrow, that my obligations were infinite. Nay she was even complaisant enough to admit his visits and endure his conversations, for whole hours, to serve me, and advised me to invite him to come on those evenings I was to visit her. “That will be the means of amusing him and not exposing yourself,” said she; “and, likewise, of pleasing your aunt. I promise never to leave you; for, indeed,

indeed, there is nothing I would not do to serve you."

" My aunt now became very good humoured, teized me no more, and I hoped, thus, to gain time; but it is now three days since she brought me two large sheets of paper, commanded me to read them, sign which I pleased, and left me in utter astonishment. They seemed like two large contracts! And was I then permitted to chuse between Lindorf and de Zastrow? Such for a moment were my hopes; but I soon saw they both related to the odious de Zastrow, whom I hated more and more. One of them was what I had suspected, a marriage contract with him, to which nothing was wanting but my signature, and by which I was made heiress to my aunt. The other was a deed

a deed of conveyance of this inheritance to the Baron de Zastrow, should I refuse to sign the first. Oh! how happy was I thus to be left to my choice! How instantly did I sign the conveyance, and run with it, joyously skipping, into my aunt's apartment! Her nephew was with her. "There, there, there!" said I, "it is done; I have signed it, most willingly." Young de Zastrow, as vain and self-sufficient as ever, had not the least doubt but it was the marriage contract, and, kneeling, returned me a thousand thanks for my condescension. "I am quite delighted, Sir," said I, laughing, "to see you so pleased, though, really, you owe me no thanks, I not having the least merit, for I have only followed my own inclinations."

"His transports now redoubled, and I was malicious enough to repeat, with great

solemnity,

solemnity, "Yes sir, I assure you I have wholly followed my inclination—to remain free—Beside, my aunt has a right to bestow her benefactions where she pleases; nor have I ever wished to enjoy wealth which seems to be put in competition with the greatest of earthly blessings, the right of bestowing my heart and hand."

"Imagine the look and manner of de Zastrow as he rose—My aunt saw which paper it was I had signed, and her eyes spoke her feelings; but, before she had time to give them utterance, I fell, and, kissing her hands again and again, said, "My dear, dear aunt, do not be angry; every thing is well as it is; neither mention marriage nor an inheritance which I never desired, nor ever once thought of; only let this contract be destroyed; (as I

said this I tore it in a thousand pieces) leave the deed of gift in the possession of my cousin de Zastrow; men have more occasion for riches than we have, and I covet nothing but your friendship, the friendship of my brother, and the love of Lindorf, or, at least, the liberty of loving him all my life. The Baron de Zastrow will find many women who will be proud to be distinguished by him, and who will not be in love with Lindorf; who, therefore, might afford him that happiness I cannot; and, when you should see your poor Matilda lying dead of a broken heart, who, then, could restore her to you?"

"I thought my aunt seemed affected and was about to yield to my entreaties, for she tenderly raised me up, pressed my hand, and, turning towards de Zastrow,

said,

said, "you hear her, nephew, what do you think?"—De Zastrow was striding furiously about the chamber. "Think, madam," answered he, with a tragic terror in his voice and features, "I cannot think. Death or Matilda must be mine!" At the same moment he drew his sword; yes, I assure you, he drew his sword, and seemed determined to kill himself. I sprang to him and seized his arm; my aunt cried out like a person expiring, and said she was *very very ill!* I knew not which of them to attend, nor could I calm either, till I promised to do every thing they pleased; while I myself was so much agitated, and terrified, that I scarcely could utter these few words, which, however, produced an astonishing effect. The sword was in its scabbard again, my aunt came to herself, kissed me, caressed me,

and earnestly begged me immediately to sign.

" Luckily for me, however, I had prevented all signing for that night; as the torn contract, scattered about the floor, informed them. It was, therefore, deferred till the morrow; but they required me to renew my promise. The moment my terror was gone, I shuddered at what had passed, and at the engagement I had entered into without knowing what I did; and when I was desired to confirm this engagement I was so much affected that I fainted away. They were obliged to carry me into my chamber, and lay me on a bed; the motion somewhat brought me to myself, for, though I could not speak, I heard what they were saying. They thought me still in a fit, and my aunt said to the Baron,

ron, “ Do not be alarmed, nephew, this will soon be over; we have terrified her a little too much, but the greatest difficulty is conquered, she has promised; to-morrow she shall sign, the next day you shall marry her, and her brother may then say what he pleases. At present we must leave her undisturbed”—After which they quitted the chamber, recommending me to the care of my woman.

“ Oh ! what infinite matter was here for reflection, when I came perfectly to myself; which this contributed to effect ! I considered and re-considered every word, nor was there one that did not give either surprise, anger, fear, grief, and even joy. I presently dismissed my attendant—*We have terrified her a little too much!* repeated I. And so they have been playing a scene, in which I have been the dupe of the comedy !

A trick, concerted between my aunt and this self-killing cousin, to obtain my consent!—I despised the artifice, and, from that moment, held myself free; yet I shrank back with horror when I recollect ed *She has promised; to-morrow she shall sign, and the next day you shall marry her*—“No, I will die, first,” repeated I. What followed gave me a ray of hope. *Her brother may then say what he pleases—We shall no longer fear him.* “So they stand in awe of this dear brother, then, whom I thought in the interest of my persecutors, but is not! They have deceived me in that too; and I still have a protector, a friend, who will not forsake me.”—Alas! in my joy of having again this friend, this good brother, I forgot how far distant we were, and that the next day my fate was to be determined.

“I re-

"I remained thus, agitated by a thousand different thoughts, when Mademoiselle de Manteul entered. The moment I saw her, I held out my arms, and, weeping, exclaimed, "Oh! come, come to the assistance of your wretched friend!" Yet little did I imagine all her friendship was capable of performing! She was as pale, trembling, and affected as I myself—"I know every thing," said she; "I have just left your aunt. What have you done, Matilda? You have promised to marry de Zastrow."

"He was going to kill himself."

"Kill himself! silly girl; men are not so ready to kill themselves. But what do you mean? Do you intend to keep this fatal promise? Do you recollect all those you have made to Lindorf?"

"Ah! can you think I have forgot them?"
I passionately answered I. "No; they are
all engraved on my heart, and ere they are
effaced they shall tear that heart from my
bosom! Yet, what am I to do? How may
I free myself from this detested marriage?
Speak, tell me, dear friend; can you ima-
gine any means of delay till I write to my
brother, till he can return and protect me?
For, from what I have just heard, that I
now am sure he will. Oh! if he were not
in Russia, I know what I would do."

"Why, what would you do?" said Ma-
demoiselle de Manteul, who seemed deep
in thought; "what would you do?"

"I would escape; fly to him for safety."

"And have you the courage?" said she.

"How

"How I admire you, my young friend ! This is, in reality, the sole means left. so I myself thought of it, but durst not make the proposition."

"Alas !" answered I, "the thing is impossible ; my brother is in Russia. I never shall find the means of going thither."

"I own it is difficult ; but have not you a maternal uncle in London ?"

"I have ; my Lord Seymour."

"Suppose you were to put yourself under his protection ?"

"What ! fly to England and Lindorf there ! Can you imagine" —

"No ; I should not have imagined that

would have been a reason to avoid England."

"Ah! my dear friend," said I, shaking my head, "if you have no other proposal but this to offer I am undone. Rather would I go to Russia, impossible as it is, and seek an asylum from my brother, than act with such imprudence. I spoke this with so firm a tone that she offered no reply, but asked me what it was *I just had beard.* I then repeated my aunt's conversation, and, suddenly interrupting me, she exclaimed, "If they have deceived you in one respect they may have in another, and, it is my firm opinion, your brother is not in Russia, for I recollect to have heard something as well as you——I will go immediately to your aunt, and, if I am not mistaken, presently discover the truth. We then shall know what we have to do."

"She

"She went, and it was not long before she returned. Pleasure sparkled in her eyes. "I was right in my conjecture," said she, as she entered; "they have imposed upon you; your brother is at Berlin, married to a lovely lady; his letters have been intercepted, he is soon coming to Dresden, but they are determined to marry you, with or without your consent, before his arrival. To-morrow you will be forced to sign the contract; nay, they will even guide your hand, if you will not sign it willingly, and the day following you are to be married. All this has your aunt told me in secrefy. "My niece has promised," said she, "and she shall keep her promise."

"Oh! my God! my God!" cried I, "what shall I do? And you tell me these things with apparent pleasure."

I 6

"Why,

" Why, I really thought it would please you to hear your brother is at Berlin, and that you may, if you please, free yourself from their tyranny."

" Perhaps I might—but"—

" But—What, and is all your courage gone so suddenly?—Ah! poor Matilda; I perceive you never will have the resolution to remain firm. Lindorf has got your letter, is returning, or, perhaps, returned; and what will he say when he shall find you are married?"

" Cruel friend!" replied I, with chagrin;
" is this your consolation?"

" What would you have me say to a feeble and timid child, who does not know her own mind? Those evils we want the fortitude

fortitude to rid ourselves of we must endure; and I can assure you that, in two days, if you are at Dresden, you will be the Baroness de Zastrow."

"Never, never," answered I, with enthusiasm—"Never shall that hated name be mine: I will prove that this feeble and timid child has more resolution than you suspect; nay, has enough to face even death itself."

"Die! Pshaw! Who would die, when they may live, and live happily?"

"I see no means; it is impossible. I cannot go by myself to Berlin. I should lose myself a thousand times; neither should I ever have the strength to get thither."

"Mademoiselle de Manteul could not forbear

bear laughing.—“Poor girl! And so you thought I meant to send you to Berlin, alone, and on foot, a fugitive heroine, in disguise, no doubt, with a bundle in your hand, and a large straw hat tied under your chin, beneath which should be discovered a certain dignified and noble air, which some piteous stage-coachman perceiving should give you a place on the box. This, no doubt, would be vastly clever and interesting, but the way I mean to propose is much less dangerous and more simple. One of my former maids is married to the post-master of the city. She is entirely devoted to me, and her husband will not only furnish a chaise and horses but conduct you himself; will accompany you till you get safe to your brother, and, if you please, you may now escape, and wait at their house till you set off. You have your choice to do this

this or marry de Zastrow; for there is no alternative; you must determine for the marriage or the elopement; and, if you let the moment slip, it will be impossible for me to serve you."

" My choice is made," said I, instantly; " and, sure, I am most fortunate in a friend. I will fly to my brother, who will protect me for my Lindorf—And yet it is a great crime to deceive my aunt."

" Your aunt thinks it none to deceive you, most unworthily."

" But suppose I were to try, once more, to move her"—

" Your trial would be vain. Tears, prayers, persecutions, and even faintings, are

are expected, which, far from being moved
at, they perhaps will profit by."

"I will be gone," cried I; "neither
scruples nor remorse shall stay me. I am
shamefully treated, and I have no longer
any other inquietude than that which the
fear of escaping in safety gives."

"Nothing is easier. Take my gown,
cloak, and veil; they will suppose it me,
and leave me to follow you. Wait for me
at our house, I will presently be with you."

"Mademoiselle de Manteul is not very
scrupulous," said the Count, smiling. "You
cannot imagine half her zeal," contin-
ued Matilda. I myself was incapable of
either acting or thinking; but she, in a
moment, got every thing ready, helped me

to put on my disguise, opened the door, kissed me, pushed me forwards, and said, " Go, go, dear Matilda ; you have not a moment to lose : they may be coming here the next minute, perhaps; fly, or farewell all hope." Fear gave me courage, and I had got to the bottom of the staircase when I recollect I ought to write a note, and leave it on my table, for my aunt ; that she might be certain, at least, I was not dead. I returned, and Mademoiselle de Manteul, terrified at seeing me, thought I had met some one on the stairs. Scarcely had I begun to tell her what brought me back before she interrupted me. " You are mad," said she ; " Write a letter ! Give your aunt time to come and catch you ! She told me she was coming up presently—Begone, begone ! They are

not

not so easily to be persuaded people are going to kill themselves as you are!"

"The fear of being caught made me compliant, and I got out without being perceived. I had not far to go, nor was it long before my friend came to me. "We have a whole hour to take our measures in," said she; "they think you are asleep, and I advised them to leave you in peace, at present. The first thing you have to do, therefore, is to go to the post-house; for, should they find you absent, they will come to seek you here immediately. You will there remain in safety. If you want any money I can assist you."

"Thanks to your goodness, my brother, I did not want this kind of assistance. My friend, therefore, went with me to the mis-tres

tress of the post-house, who consented to every thing she proposed, and with whom she left me. It was very probable they would come to seek me at the house of Mademoiselle de Manteul, and, therefore, necessary she should be at home to avoid suspicion.

“ No sooner was I alone than I began to be deeply affected at the terror of my aunt, when she found me gone, and was wholly ignorant what was become of me. Disobedience and flight were sufficient offences, and needed not aggravation. I, therefore, resolved to repair them, as far as was in my power, and, having called for pen, ink, and paper, wrote nearly thus.

“ I have just been informed, my dear aunt, my brother is at Berlin, and am
“ so

" so impatient to see him that I have gone
" without asking a permission which, in
" all probability, would have been refused,
" and have thus spared myself the regret
" of a denial and again being disobedient.
" I am already sufficiently afflicted for
" having displeased you by my resistance
" to your will. Ah ! why, my dear aunt,
" have you forced me thus to displease,
" thus to refuse compliance, thus to fly
" from you ? How happy should I have
" been could I have contributed to your
" felicity ! The Baron de Zastrow must
" have sufficient delicacy to feel that a pro-
~~mis~~ mize, extorted by terror and disowned by
~~the~~ the heart, is not binding. I hope he
" will no more think of killing himself,
" for I am no longer there to catch his
" arm ; I would earnestly advise him to
" live

Right }

" live, and, above all, to live happy with—
" out Matilda."

" I gave this note in charge to one of the landlady's children, and bade him deliver it to the porter, without saying who it came from. More at ease, now I thought my aunt would be so too, I waited with tolerable patience for Mademoiselle de Manteul, who had promised to see me again before I set off, and who, at length, came.

" You have not a moment to lose," said she ; " you must depart at day-break ; the Baron is searching you through every house in town ; he has just left ours, and I encouraged him to continue this search, which will give you time to get the start. It was exceedingly lucky you did not write, as your silly whim would have made you." —

I durst

I durst not confess I just had wrote, but I now felt my imprudence, and the fear of being pursued was so strong that I was unwilling to go. My friend employed all her eloquence to encourage me; she described the anger of my aunt, the necessity I should be under of confessing where I had been, and who had assisted me, the ascendant which my elopement and return would give her over me; told me there would be no possibility of appeasing but by obeying her, and that, if ever I entered her house again, she was certain I should be married within two hours.—“I will go,” said I; “I will go instantly; the die is cast, and, be the event what it will, I will go;” and accordingly orders to get the chaise and horses ready were immediately given. Mademoiselle de Manteul, fearing I again should relapse, would not leave me. She was under

under no apprehensions about her father, whose gout kept him at home; she sent him word that she should sup out, and remained with me till the moment of departure. Of de Zastrow, of my brother, of Lindorf, of every thing that might encourage me to keep my resolution, she spoke. "Depend on me," said she; "I will go, in the morning, to de Zastrow, and lead him to suspect you are flown to England. He shall not easily get away from me, and by that time you will be so far on the way to Berlin that all pursuit will be in vain." This gave me a little confidence; or, rather, it was now too late to listen to fear. To recede was no longer possible, and I beheld the moment of departure arrive with pleasure. Unable to express my gratitude, except by my kisses and tears, while my friend was enraptured to see me, as she said,

said, escape so many dangers, I got into the chaise and" —

"Alone!" interrupted the Count.

"No; the mistress of the house, who is now with me, and who, formerly, as I said, had served Mademoiselle de Manteul, whose husband conducted us" —

"But where is Lindorf?" replied the Count, again stopping her short. "It seems that Mademoiselle de Manteul, not he, has carried you off."

"And did you think it was Lindorf?"

"I own, I am glad to find it was not; though there seems something incomprehensible in all this!"

"A little patience, brother, and you will not hereafter judge of your Matilda from appearances.

"And now, behold me in the post-chaise, with the good Marianne, for that is her name; escorted by her husband, on horseback, stopping only to change horses, tossing ducats into the postillion's hats, and taking each bush for the Baron de Zastrow. My companion did all she could to inspire courage. Mademoiselle de Manteul was her oracle, and she, every minute, repeated "there was nothing to fear, for Mademoiselle had told her so." These assurances made me more tranquil; and, having travelled the first day without interruption, I thought myself in perfect safety. Just, however, as we came yesterday to the post-house, I, very imprudently, put my head

out of the carriage, and, presently, heard a voice, I thought I knew, cry, "It is she! It is she herself! Postillion! Stop! On your life stop!" And I presently saw young de Zastrow, at the side of the chaise, with a thousand menaces in his countenance."

"De Zastrow!" cried the Count and Caroline.

"Yes; De Zastrow, and without the help of witchcraft. What, you suppose some malicious fairy has winged him through the air. Nay, to say the truth, I supposed so myself, at first; but, alas! I soon found this good for nothing fairy was neither more nor less than my own imprudence. The note I had written had indicated the road I should take, and the Ba-

ron had not lost his time in further search at Dresden. He supposed I had, no doubt, written it, in the carriage, and that, by setting off immediately, he should easily overtake and bring me back; and this supposition made him depart two or three hours before me. I imagined myself pursued, while, on the contrary, I was full speed pursuing, and, unfortunately enough, overtook him at this post-house, where he was waiting for horses. How great must have been the surprise of my dear friend, Mademoiselle de Manteul, when she found, in the morning, he was gone! And how excessive her inquietude and fears for me! At present, however, I hope she is easier."

"Yes, yes," said the Count, smiling. "she is easy enough, never fear. But go on with your story, it is quite romantic."

" Romantic, indeed! I assure you, I think it a very extraordinary story! But we are not half at the end of it yet—Let me see—Terror, fright, and consternation, at the sight of de Zaitrow. Yes, yes; I was there—Well, then: I shrieked, and hid myself in a corner of the chaise, while Marianne screamed to the postillion to go on; de Zastrow threatened and bade him stop, his servants came up, and the crowd increased. Something must be done, and I thought it best to speak to the Baron, to ask him by what right he interrupted me, or pretended to deprive me of my liberty, and to tell him, openly, I would rather die than either marry him or return to Dresden. Accordingly I again looked out of the chaise, and there I saw!—

" Now, if you please, you may talk of
witchcraft,

witchcraft, fairies, and romances; any thing, or every thing, you can suppose miraculous and inconceivable; for there did I see—Lindorf! Yes, Lindorf himself; who, instead of in England, was there, beside the chaise, as much astonished as myself. Matilda!—Lindorf!—These exclamations were mutual and instantaneous, and I really believed heaven had sent him to my succour; therefore, leaping out of the chaise—

“I cannot go on,” said Matilda, “you must finish the story, Lindorf; you know the remainder better than I do.” Then, with her head reclined on the shoulder of Caroline, she whispered, “I hope he will not tell how I sprang into his arms and clasped him in mine with all my strength.”

"Aye, aye, let me conjure thee, dear Lindorf, to go on," said the Count, impatiently; "prithee, explain by what strange chance thou camest, just at that precise moment, on the Dresden road, and in company with the Baron de Zastrow."

"I had returned," said Lindorf, "to answer, in person, the charming, the tender letter I had received at London. My being there at this moment was accidental, but I was not in company with the Baron de Zastrow. It was chance, or, rather, my guardian genius that brought me to the post-house just then. I was unacquainted with the Baron, but I saw a young man of quality, impatient to obtain horses, and quite furious because none were to be found. He inquired, at the same time, if a young lady, whom he

endeavoured to describe, had not lately passed that road. They answered, no, and he again began to swear it was false, she must have passed; and again to bestow his curses on the postillions and the postmaster. As soon as I alighted from my chaise, for I was going to Dresden, he came up, and said, "you, certainly, Sir, must have met a young lady, alone, very handsome, driving full speed!"

"No, Sir, I assure you, I met no such lady; nor, indeed, any lady, that I remember."

"This is very extraordinary!" said he, stamping—"Perhaps the note was a new trick!—Excuse me, Sir, for questioning you so abruptly. I am pursuing a woman I adore, who promised me her hand yesterday,

was to have married me to-day, and who eloped last night!"

"The misfortune is the greater," answered I, "Sir, because you do not seem that kind of person the ladies would fly." My compliment seemed to please him, and acquired me his entire confidence. He bowed, and, with much self-sufficiency, which he endeavoured to render modest, replied, "I own, Sir, it is not the first time I have been told so; and there have been ladies who have gone farther than telling; but you see how different tastes are; and, certainly, that of women is very often very capricious. Is it not quite extraordinary that her I am pursuing is yet not eighteen; and that, notwithstanding, she has a whim of romantic fidelity for a lover who has forsaken her, and whom

she

she will never see again? I am unacquainted with him, but should suppose personal accomplishments not *infinitely* in his favour; and, as to birth and fortune, in these I yield to no man."

" All this, Sir, I make no doubt, is true; but if your rival has the advantage of being beloved"—

" Beloved, or not beloved," said he, " it is equal to me; he is absent, will see her no more; if I can overtake her, she is mine, and shall be obliged to adore me."

" This conversation passed before the post-house, and I was amazed at the facility with which this indiscreet and vain young man spoke to a stranger, as well as at his total want of delicacy, and silently approved the

fugitive lady. Just then a chaise came up, full gallop, from Dresden, and interrupted us. He did not seem to have the least suspicion, and looked towards it from mere curiosity, till, the chaise stopping, a lady looked out. I had but a glimpse, and did not know it was Matilda, but my gentleman, instantly, exclaimed, "It is she! It is she!" While the lady drew back, exclaiming, in her turn, "It is he!" The maid bade the postillion drive on, while de Zastrow, with uplifted cane, threatened to knock him off his horse if he moved a step. I hesitated, for a moment, what part I should take. The frankness of the youth had, in some measure, laid me under an obligation; and yet I felt myself affected for the unfortunate lady, whom they were going to marry against her consent. My first intention was to become a mediator,

if

if possible, and to inspire the terrified lady with fortitude, for which purpose I approached the chaise, far from imagining how deeply I myself was interested in this adventure. As I came up I heard my own name repeated in an accent of amazement! The door opened, and out flew Matilda, whom I instantly knew, notwithstanding the finished beauty, alteration, and growth, of her person! The charming Matilda placed herself by my side, took me by the hand, and said, in a voice which terror and joy had rendered faint, "Dear, dear Lindorf! God has surely sent you to the assistance and defence of your Matilda! They want to rob you of her, but they never never shall! She will be yours, and yours only."

"No sooner did the Baron hear my

name than, throwing away his cane, drawing his sword, and arrogantly advancing, he exclaimed, "Lindorf! What treachery is this?" Then, addressing himself to Matilda, said, "I entreat, Mademoiselle, you will go into my post-chaise. I have the positive commands of your aunt to bring you back to Dresden, and I dare say the Baron of Lindorf will not think proper to oppose those commands."

"That we shall presently see, Sir," answered, I coldly, while I supported Matilda, whom so many contending passions had occasioned to faint in my arms. I gently carried her into the post-house and laid her on the first bed I found; then, recommending her to the persons present, telling them they should be answerable for her forthcoming, I immediately left her, and went in search of the Baron de Zastrow. I

found

found him demanding entrance, and forcibly withheld by two or three men, who let him go the moment I appeared. We walked together to some distance, and went into an enclosed garden. " You have accused me of treachery, sir," said I, " and appearances may give some small justification to the suspicion; but I assure you, on my honour, that chance, only, a most lucky one it is true, has brought me here. When I spoke to you, I was ignorant both that you were my rival and that Matilda had fled. If you think this sufficient satisfaction, and will leave the young Countess of Walstein absolute mistress of herself, I promise you to abide by her decision, and here offer you my future friendship and esteem; if not, I will defend my own pretensions and her liberty at the hazard of my life."

" Defend

"Defend them, then, traitor," replied he, attacking me with so much impetuosity that, being off my guard, I received a wound in the left arm. It was not dangerous, and only roused my anger; and the Baron took so little care, thinking himself certain of victory, when he saw me wounded, that I easily disarmed him. His sword flew out of his hand and, as it fell, I set my foot on it—"Your life," said I, "is now in my power; I am wounded and you are not; but, disregarding this small disadvantage, I am ready to restore your sword, and, again, put it to the chance of victory, if you do not renounce your pretensions to Matilda, and promise to depart for Dresden, immediately, without seeing her."

"He hesitated, and I saw, by the change of his countenance, my manner of acting had

had made some impression. Pride still struggled, but honour, at last, was conqueror, and he presented his hand. "Re-
"collect," said he, "Sir, you have, on these conditions, offered your esteem and friendship. I feel, at present, I shall be proud of and will, therefore, endeavour to merit them, by prevailing on my aunt to confirm that happiness which is justly your due. Forget the past, and make my peace with Matilda. I pretend only to her friendship; though," added he, with a mixture of former self-sufficiency, "I am not accustomed to disdain; nor do I know by what fascination I so long have supported hers." I embraced him, said she would certainly be the last cruel beauty he would find, and that, had not her heart been pre-engaged she could not possibly

have

have resisted so many accomplishments and so much merit; after which we parted the best friends in the world.

"As soon as I saw him get into his chaise, I hastened to Matilda, concerning whom I was very uneasy. Her fainting, however, was most happily timed, since it deprived her of the knowledge of a transaction that might have occasioned dreadful terrors. She began to recover and, looking round her, asked where she was, as I entered; then, resuming all her accustomed grace, "Dear Lindorf," said she, "and is it not a dream? Is it true that I have once more found thee, and that we never shall forsake each other again?"

Scarcely had Lindorf finished his phrase ere he felt the white hand of Matilda

tilda upon his mouth.—“ Fie, fie, young gentleman,” said she, “ I see no occasion to repeat all that passed so literally. My dear brother, and my dear, dear sister, do not believe a word he says. For, what if I had thought all that, can you suppose I would have spoken my thoughts? And, even, if I did, you know I was fainting. Who can tell what they do after so strange a meeting, pressed by one lover, protected by another, and amongst renounters and battles, and all this hurly burly? One may be allowed to be a little extravagant and silly, on such occasions; but, at present, I assure you, I am as prudent as”—Matilda smiled, with malicious pleasure, on Lindorf; then, suddenly clasping his hand, added, “ Well then, I say again and again, every thing I said yesterday! And I hope we shall never forsake each other more!”

Matilda

Matilda was so charming, as she said this, and there was such a mixture of rapture, pleasantry, and confusion in her countenance, that Lindorf imagined he loved her dearer than ever he had loved woman, and expressed himself with so much enthusiasm and fire that every body thought the same. Caroline was transported, she kissed the Count, and said, "Was I wrong when I told you how dearly he would love her?" Walstein beheld Lindorf with astonishment, nor yet could comprehend, perfectly, all he heard and saw. To reason and friendship he had attributed the attachment of Lindorf to Matilda; for well he recollects to what excess he had adored Caroline; nor could imagine how a passion so energetic might so soon change its object. Yet was there every appearance of sincerity in his manner, and

words;

words; and Lindorf was no hypocrite. Beside, the Count was so accustomed to read his thoughts that, had he been under any real constraint, it could not have escaped him, and he could observe nothing but sincerity. Lindorf, on his part, guessed what was passing in the mind of the Count, and whispered, "when we are alone, dear Walstein, you shall hear my story, and your surprise will then not be so great. In the mean time, do not imagine your friend has acquired a facility at feigning; or that he does not feel all he expresses." The Count clasped his hand, and entreated Matilda to finish her story. There was not much to say, but the least circumstance was interesting to the Count and Caroline. Matilda replied, " You forget, brother, that Lindorf is the historian, at present"—Lindorf thus continued.

"I found

I found a village surgeon to dress my wound, and hoped I might have concealed it from Matilda, as well as my contest with the Baron. I, therefore, only told her he had listened to reason, departed for Dresden, and promised to appease his aunt. She was most happy at the intelligence, and, being equally impatient to see our friend and brother, we presently departed. The motion of the carriage, and, perhaps, the emotion of my heart, soon disturbed my wound, and Matilda was greatly agitated when she saw the blood. It was impossible any longer to conceal the cause, and we were obliged to stop here to dress it again. It was found deeper than had been imagined, and I was condemned to take four and twenty hours repose. In vain did I solicit my lovely partner to continue her journey, and leave me in this

wretched

wretched inn; no entreaties could gain her consent."

"No, to be sure," interrupted Matilda, with vivacity. "I know my duty better. Who ever heard of a heroine of romance abandoning her wounded knight, who had defended her against a ferocious ravisher? I even thought it necessary, according to custom, to dress that wound myself, and bathe it with my tears. Did not I, Lindorf? And I hope you will own I tied the scarf with tolerable grace. Was not my attitude and manner affecting, brother?"

"The very picture of a princess of the age of Amadis."

"No; one of the mistresses of the famous Galaor," said she, glancing at Lindorf.

"It

"It was the mistress, then, that fixed the rover," replied he, kissing her hand.

"So said Galaor to every mistress, and they believed him; but I," continued Matilda, "am not so credulous, and mean to put your sincerity to the proof—In those times, a woman, with *sang froid*, commanded her lover not to pronounce a single word for two years, and he obeyed. Oh! happy age! I, though I only shall impose rest and silence on my wounded hero till to-morrow, am certain to find him disobedient!"

"Never, never," said Lindorf kneeling; "and there will be some merit in my submission, for I have many things to tell my Walstein."

"And so you would have passed a whole night

night in chattering ; mean while the fever and the wound ?—I reiterate my absolute command !—Silence and rest till to-morrow !”

Exact obedience was promised, though not without reluctance. The friends were both impatient to communicate their sentiments ; and, particularly, the Count, who was doubly interested to find the heart of Lindorf cured of passion for Caroline, and capable of making Matilda happy. It was, therefore, agreed that, in recompense for this their silence, they should travel, on the morrow, in the chaise of Lindorf, and leave the coach of the Count to the ladies. This arrangement was equally acceptable to Caroline, who was herself most desirous the friends should mutually explain their feelings, that Walstein might be convinced

of

of the exact truth of all she had told him, and inform Lindorf of her present love for her husband. Matilda, perhaps, might have preferred the care of her wounded knight; but Matilda dared not say so; and her brother having mentioned sending his servant to Dresden, with letters for his aunt, she also retired to write, both to her and Mademoiselle de Manteul, to whom she sent back the servants and chaise.

She presently returned with her two letters. The Count read that to Madam de Zastrow, approved it, added a few lines from himself, and, perceiving Matilda concealed the one she had written to Mademoiselle de Manteul, said, smiling, "I suppose you express your gratitude in strong terms to your zealous friend."

"I ex-

"I express it as I feel it; and, I think, that is saying a great deal. You, who are one of the heroes of friendship, ought, certainly, to be delighted to find such an instance of its effects; especially in a woman."—The Count continued to smile.—"And pray now, what is the meaning of that ironic air? What, you are incredulous?—Sister Caroline, I hope you will take the part of the sex."

"We will both take its part," answered Caroline, "and prove how capable women are of friendship."

"I never doubted it," replied Walstein; "nay, I even believe that pure disinterested friendship is less rare among women than it is supposed. It is a sensation wholly accordant to their gentle and tender nature;

but you will forgive me for not imagining Mademoiselle de Manteul one of its models."

" Brother!—After so many proofs!"

" I am almost sorry, dear Matilda, to rob you of that happy credulity which so well proves the innocence of your heart; but, I must own, I have very strong doubts concerning those proofs. Mademoiselle de Manteul appeared greatly affected; but was it for you or for herself? Was it to serve a friend or to get rid of a rival? Every circumstance, I think, bespeaks the latter."

Matilda was confounded. A thousand little incidents were recollected, and a thousand others rushed forward to prove her brother was right; yet could she not instantly

instantly give her up, and replied, with vivacity, "Surely you must be deceived, she dislikes, nay, detests the Baron; she was always speaking ill of and turning him to ridicule."

"Right, right; to augment your repugnance. This is the very cause why I say she is not a true friend. Had Mademoiselle de Manteul, the victim of an involuntary passion, opened her heart to you, and given you secret for secret; had you together concerted the means of avoiding a marriage that must render you both unhappy, I should have faith in her friendship, and even be far from blaming her; but all this artifice at her age is odious: she only had herself in view by prompting you to an imprudent step, which the event has justified, but which might have been your destruction."

Lindorf, here, took up the subject.
“ You are too severe, dear Walstein ; be the motives of Mademoiselle de Manteul what they may, she has served me so essentially that it becomes me to undertake her justification, and I see nothing in all this but artifice which may well be permitted to love ; besides, while she was serving herself, she was, also, saving her friend from inevitable misfortune.”

“ No doubt,” said Matilda, who took courage at seeing herself supported ; “ for one day longer, and I had been forced to marry that odious Baron.”

“ And do you not perceive, my dear girl, that, I being on the road, one day longer and you had been for ever freed from tyranny, without that violence which is ever

prejudicial

prejudicial to a young lady's reputation, and without offence to an aunt to whose cares you are certainly much indebted? Your only error, dear Matilda, was that of suspecting my friendship; of supposing, for an instant, I could abandon you; and of blindly confiding in an imprudent young lady, though, I own, she is rather to blame than you."

"Dear, dear brother," cried Matilda, all in tears, and running into his arms, "pardon us both. Ah! how do I reproach myself for having mentioned, for having given you an ill opinion of her! But so far was I from suspecting it that I supposed you would admire her conduct and her zeal."

Lindorf joined Matilda, and chid his friend for his severity. Caroline clasped

her to her bosom, and, while she wiped away her tears, wept in concert—" Think not I wish ill to Mademoiselle de Manteul," said the Count, exceedingly affected. " No, to her I owe the happiness of beholding those I love united. So freely do I pardon her that I sincerely hope she may marry de Zastrow, and will even speak in her behalf to my aunt. And now, Matilda, do thou pardon me for having afflicted and undeceived thee. It will be a lesson to thee, my dear, and the last I shall ever give thee; for, from this moment, I commit thy conduct, and thy felicity to Lindorf. Thou knowest how ardently I have desired to see thee his. Oh! Caroline, Oh! my sister, Oh! my friend, scarcely can my heart contain its joys, the sweet sensations this happy moment brings!"

Matilda

Matilda a thousand times thanked her brother for his sincerity, and for the instruction it contained. "Though," said she, "I scarcely can repent my imprudence, since it has made us all happy a day sooner." And added that she would, in a postscript, let Mademoiselle de Manteul pleasantly understand that, at present, she was acquainted with her motives.—The Count was not at all deceived in his conjectures, for Mademoiselle de Manteul had been solely prompted by her passion for the young Baron de Zastrow, who had paid her some attentions before he went on his travels, and who, she hoped, would have married her on his return. The arrival of Matilda at Dresden, the wishes of her aunt, the attachment of the young Baron to the amiable spouse destined him, all repelled hopes which Matilda's love of Lindorf once more

animated. She had only sought her friendship to have an opportunity of seeing the Baron revive his former sentiments, discover those of Matilda, and, if possible, turn them towards some other object. At first she had had her brother in view, and, therefore, had shewn Matilda his letter; but her joy was excessive when she learned this lover already existed, and that her young rival was determined on the most peremptory resistance. This it was her advantage to encourage all in her power; but this alone was not sufficient; the best means of obtaining her own end, she supposed, would be to remove Matilda from Dresden. This might best be done by engaging her to take some step which should absolutely break off the intended match. She it was who persuaded Madam de Zastrow, and her nephew, that, by terrorizing

rifying Matilda, they might obtain her consent; and what the consequence of this terror and the success of her schemes were has already been seen. Yet was she but little benefited by her artifice, for the young Baron, recognizing, in the post-chaise, the former maid of Mademoiselle de Manteul, and being convinced she had favored Matilda's flight, was irritated at the perfidious trick that had been played him. But this perfidy was the consequence of affection; and when the vanity of man is flattered he is generally indulgent.

Return we to our happy travellers. The wound of Lindorf healed apace, so excellent a balsamic is happiness, and they set off for Berlin; Caroline and Matilda in one of the carriages, and the two friends in the other. Leave we these lovely ladies to

speak of those they held most dear, to congratulate each other, to form plans of future delight, and to vow eternal friendship. Leave we them frequently to look out of the carriage after the post-chaise that followed, wishing impatiently to arrive, and let us examine how Walstein and Linderhof passed their time.

They partook of the impatience we have mentioned; but man feels not so sensibly those short privations which are subjects of such real uneasiness to the tender heart of woman. Perhaps, on great occasions, the former may be more ardent, more passionate, more capable of risking every thing for the object of their love; but the daily proofs, the intervening fears, and all the shades of a delicate and constant passion, are much more peculiar to women; few

men

men are susceptible of them; nay, few know their value. Our travellers, indeed, had not time to think of them; yet had they been in the chaise some time without entering into any conversation. They sat silent, for Lindorf knew not where to begin, or what to say to the husband of Caroline, and the Count feared lest the most trifling question might bear the aspect of reproach: he, however, was the first to speak, and told his friend how much he had been afflicted by reading the manuscript he had left with Caroline. "I have not the least fear or scruple," said he, "in confiding the happiness of a sister to the man to whom I am so infinitely indebted, and who, loving and beloved by the most angelic woman the world contains, could not only sacrifice his own passion, but endeavour to inspire her with love for another. Ah! dear

Lindorf," said he, " while to you I owe the heart of Caroline and the felicity of Matilda, is it possible I ever can acquit myself of the wondrous debt? Yet, speak, explain how this sudden revolution in your affections, which yet I understand not, has happened. Is not all you testify for my sister another sacrifice of generous friendship? Endeavour not to impose upon yourself. Can Caroline——

" Dear Walstein," interrupted Lindorf, instantly, " I would utter oaths if I did not know the word of your friend were sufficient. Believe that friend, then, when he assures you he is worthy of becoming your brother; and that nothing has he expressed that he has not felt. I love Caroline, no doubt, but it is as I love her husband, with friendship as pure and strong as it

it is durable; but I love my dear Matilda as the sole woman on earth who now can make me happy—You are surprised, but hear what I have to say. Learn what has passed in the heart you yourself have formed since last we parted.”

The Count was most desirous to hear, and sat attentive while Lindorf thus continued.

“ Since you have read my manuscript, Walstein, you are informed of my first acquaintance with Caroline, and what were the sentiments she inspired. I shall attempt no justification of myself. You can judge whether it be possible to see her with indifference. I protest, however, before heaven, that, notwithstanding all her beauty, all her charms, she would have been totally

totally indifferent to me had I had the least suspicion she was your wife. But this how might I have? You were silent; Caroline, then so young, bore not your name, and the good Canonesse gave evident marks of wishing to see us united. Every circumstance told me she was free and that I might dare to love her—Oh! wherefore, my friend, that fatal reserve?—Yet let us pass this over. Ignorant in my guilt, I offended the man for whom I would willingly have sacrificed my life; he has seen some faint picture of my grief, my remorse, and the resolution I took, the instant I discovered my crime, to fly. I thought I might, in some measure, repair the involuntary wrong I had done by shewing Caroline who and what the husband was she fled. I knew her foul congenial to yours, capable of estimating its worth, and that you

you were formed to admire and adore each other."

" It was thy noble friendship," exclaimed the Count, " which alone could draw me with such features and such colours as could affect the heart of Caroline. Yes, dear Lindorf, to thee alone I owe that heart and all the exquisite felicity I enjoy. No, had it not been for that passion with which thou so continually reproachest thyself, Caroline, perhaps, never had loved me. But go on, dear friend, I long to be convinced thou art equally happy, and that thou thinkest Matilda a proper recompense for the sublime efforts thou hast made to conquer a passion which could dictate the manuscript thou leftest at Rindaw and banish thee from Caroline."

" I left

"I left her," replied Lindorf, "determined never to see her more, till, by wholly subduing my fatal passion, I were worthy her and you; and far was I from foreseeing this blissful moment was so near. The solitude of Ronebourg augmented my love and gloomy melancholy; incessantly did fancy transport me to the pavilion of Rindaw, incessantly was Caroline present. I saw her, heard her, conversed with her, and when the sweet illusion vanished, despair and remorse acquired additional strength, and they were tried to the utmost by your arrival and conversation. You loved Caroline, your happiness depended on being beloved by her, and again I renewed my vow of surmounting my passion; or, rather, of forsaking my country, and carefully concealing from you I had been your rival. This

vow

vow had been held sacred; never had the name of Caroline escaped my lips had not she, like an apparition, appeared at Ronebourg, the occasion of which I yet understand not, and deprived me of reason. Excuse me from describing all I felt while I thought I beheld her dying, but imagine what it must be when it could make me betray the secret of my heart, and inform you that a friend, towards whom you had acted with such magnanimity, was the guilty lover of your wife!

“ My determination was to take vengeance on myself, and follow her whom I thought dead; but signs of returning life prevented me: she was restored to you, and I wished not to interrupt your happiness by the horrid spectacle of suicide. I went into my room, wrote the letter you found,

found, mounted my horse, and rode full speed, without knowing whither I went, or having so much as a single servant with me. The first day I suffered my horse to take which road he pleased, and, at night, stopped at a wretched inn ; I endeavoured, however, to collect my ideas, and resolved to follow my first intention, which was to go to England. I had written to court and obtained permission for that purpose, my servant and baggage might soon follow, and I immediately took the road to Hamburg, where I meant to embark. I rode post day and night, and this continual change of scene corresponded with the agitation of my soul, to which repose was insupportable. I wished to find a vessel ready to sail to Hamburg, and to step into it as I got out of my chaise ; but, happily, there were none ready. Some hours

hours after my arrival, I was seized with a burning fever, which lasted several days; the physician, whom my host called in, had me bled so abundantly that excessive weakness was the consequence, and retarded my departure. Obliged to remain at Hamburg till I gathered strength, I wrote to my valet de chambre to come to me there. My sickness was the natural consequence of my feelings, and the fatigues of my journey, and was certainly a fortunate one. It calmed the violence of my transports, and obliged me to follow the plan I myself had laid down, as soon as I knew you to be the husband of Caroline.

“ At present, when I no longer feel this weakness, I may own that more than twenty times on the road was I tempted to return to Ronebourg, and from your hand demand

demand Caroline or death. Had I been obliged to remain at Hamburg, without falling ill, perhaps, I should have been overcome, and for ever have rendered myself unworthy your esteem and friendship. My fever, and its consequent weakness, shewed me objects under a different point of view; and, whether the organization of the body influences the mind, whether it was the result of reflections incessantly made, or whether friendship really triumphed over love, certain it is my passion, each day, became feebler; or rather, reason became stronger. I still adored Caroline, but I adored her as a deity, without daring to suppose I again might see her. I shuddered even at the idea, and, far from wishing to return, I wished to remove farther off, and therefore waited impatiently for Varner.

" Such

" Such was the temper of my mind when the young Baron de Manteul arrived at Hamburg, and came to lodge in the same hotel; my host immediately informed him of my illness, exaggerated the danger I had been in, the care he had taken of me, the slow recovery of my strength, and inspired him with a wish to become acquainted with me. He sent up his compliments, and, as his was a Saxon family well known, I received him with pleasure. His appearance gave me a favourable impression, which was confirmed by his conversation. He was equally pleased with me, and in a few hours we were old friends. He, likewise, was going to England, but could not stop more than three days at Hamburg: hearing I intended to cross the sea, he earnestly entreated me to embark on board the same ship. My health, which

daily grew stronger, permitted me to depart, and I willingly consented to a request by which I should gain such an agreeable companion. I left a letter of instructions for my valet with the host, and in two days we left Hamburg, mutually congratulating each other on this lucky rencontre: we further agreed to live together, at London, and take lodgings in the same house.

" This young gentleman was the more agreeable to me for being almost as melancholy as myself, and we often sighed in sympathy: he first made the remark. During the voyage we were alone on the deck, each absorbed in his own ideas, and each preserving the most profound silence. Manteul at length spoke; "I think," said he, "I have discovered another conformity between us. Is it not true, dear Lindorf,

that your heart is engaged, and that you deeply regret some person whom you have left in your own country?" I, not choosing to give a direct answer, retorted the question, and told him he had made the confession."

"I own it," replied he; "and, did you know the person I regret, you, then, would have some knowledge of what my feelings are. When I quitted Saxony, I imagined I fled from the danger of loving the most charming woman in the world; but, now I see her no more, I feel the mischief is done, and that I fled too late."

"I owned my heart was as much enslaved as his, but added nothing farther; I rather endeavoured to turn the conversation, by making reflections on the pangs and effects of love.

"We

" We had a good voyage and arrived safe at London. The novelty of this vast city, its riches, the multitude of its inhabitants, and that peculiarity of manners which distance and a government so different produce, greatly relieved my melancholy ; and, as I most sincerely desired to be wholly cured of it, I myself ardently sought amusement. I recovered health and strength apace, and even a part of my natural cheerfulness, yet did Caroline occupy my heart and thoughts, and, whenever I was alone, I found they turned wholly on her ; but, as I dreaded the dangerous recollection, I took every possible means to remove it, and remained alone as seldom as possible. Manteul seldom left me ; he found, each day, his attachment increase, and seemed to fear we should part too soon. He told me he had received letters from Dresden,

which

which had lain at his banker's, waiting his arrival at London, that gave him vast pleasure. "My return," said he, "may be much sooner than I supposed; but the event that will then call me back will be so happy a one I shall only have my friend to regret." I could easily perceive he wished to open his heart to me, but that would have required a reciprocal confidence, and I was determined never to reveal my criminal secret, nor ever once to pronounce the name of Caroline; I, therefore, forbore to ask him who the object of his attachment might be, or to put any one question which might lead him to speak.

"We had been presented, by our ambassador at London, to several English noblemen; and, among others, we one day dined with the Earl of Salisbury. After dinner the toast went round, as you know, Wal-

stein, is the custom in England, and the health of the favourite lady given by each guest. When the toast came to me, my heart named Caroline, and the word rose to my lips. I forbore, however, and begged they would excuse my naming the lady whose health I drank. They joked me on my great discretion, and drank to the health of the fair incognito.

“I shall not be so discreet as Lindorf,” said Manteul, when it came to his turn; “I am proud to drink the health of Matilda, Countess of Walstein.”

“The name struck me so forcibly that I scarcely could believe what I heard real; but it was repeated round the table so often that I could no longer doubt it was that same Matilda by whom I had been so tenderly

derly beloved, and whom I had so cruelly offended. It is impossible I shoud paint the agitation I was in; though, but a moment before, I should not have supposed any human power could have pronounced a name, except Caroline, that might have made an equal impression. Manteul sat too far off for me to ask whether it was Matilda whom he loved; yet, how might I doubt when I beheld his animated countenance, as he repeated, himself, and heard others repeat, her name? I looked, and thought him handsomer than usual; he seemed to possess all the qualities of a lover, and, certainly, said I, he is beloved. The letters which gave him so much pleasure are, certainly, from Matilda, and his quick return to Dresden, which is to render him so happy, is, also, as certainly, the consequence of her command: he is

then to receive her hand whose heart he already possesses !

" These ideas ran in my mind all the afternoon, and accompanied me to the play, whither I was dragged in spite of myself. I wished immediately to have conversed with Manteul, to have learned his secret; reproached myself for having missed the opportunity, and feared lest it might not return; at last, my thoughts were so disturbed that, finding myself uneasy in the play-house, where I neither heard nor saw, I determined to quit it and come home. I there waited the arrival of Manteul with an impatience wholly unaccountable to myself. It was not long before he came; my going had alarmed him, and scarcely did I give him time to tell me so before I asked if the lady whose health he had drunk

E. M. were

were the lady he loved, and if she were sister to the Count of Walstein, Ambassador in Russia."

"Ay, certainly," replied he, with transport; "she, she herself, your charming countrywoman! Are you acquainted with her? It is some time since she left Berlin."

"I know her brother," replied I, eluding his question. "The Count of Walstein has been to me more than a friend; a father, a saviour, the man in the world most dear to my heart."

"Ah! dear Lindorf," said Manteul, embracing me with rapture, "if you are upon these terms with the Count of Walstein, I may owe all my future bliss to your friendship. She has often protested

that her brother, alone, had a right to dispose of her hand; and to him you may speak for me; you may engage him to favour my passion.—Say, will you, Lindorf, will you?"

"Doubt it not, my friend. Should Matilda, also, find this union that which her heart desires, I then will use all the power of my friendship with the Count to engage him in your interest. But I thought Matilda, in some measure, contracted to the Baron de Zastrow."

"Alas! it was that projected marriage which alone determined me to leave Dresden. I was the friend of de Zastrow, and would not become his rival. I, then, was ignorant how much Matilda disliked him; but the letter from my sister, which I found

waiting

waiting my arrival here, informed me of it, and has given me the most flattering hopes."

" And had you none before you received that letter ?"

" None, none. Matilda never testified any thing more than esteem for me, and that friendship which I thought the consequence of her intimacy with my sister ; she did not seem even to perceive how much I preferred her to every other woman. Before I left her I myself knew not the strength of my own passion ; but my sister's letter, by making happiness possible, has made me feel how much I adore that lovely lady."

" I most ardently wished to get a sight of this letter he mentioned, and my wish

was gratified ; he gave it me to read.—
“ Here, take it, my friend,” said he, “ and
see if I have not some reason to flatter my-
self. I am beloved.” —I accordingly took it
and, with great emotion, began to read.

“ Mademoiselle de Manteul blamed her
brother for departing, not following her
advice, and openly paying his addresses
to the young Countess. The Baron de
Zastrow had no right to be affronted ;
he was hated, and the marriage would
never take place. Every thing, on the
contrary, proved to her that her brother
was beloved ; she had remarked it before
he left Dresden, and she now had not
any doubt. Matilda was very sorry
when she heard he was gone, she had
even shed tears ; her former cheerfulness
had forsaken her, and what convinces
me,

“ me, said she, your absence causes her melancholy is that it redoubles whenever England is mentioned. She yesterday said, in a pet which made her look more lovely, “ I wonder why the men are all so eager to run to that good for nothing England !” This, brother, I should think a tolerably favourable symptom, and, if you want a still stronger, I must tell you she herself has begged me to show her your letters. Profit by this information. You have still time enough to repair the folly you have committed in leaving Dresden. Write me a letter, immediately ; not by way of answer to this, but seem to confide the secret of your passion for my young friend to me ; entreat me to sound her thoughts ; say fear alone occasioned you to go, but that the least ray of hope will bring you

“ back ; she will read the letter in my
“ presence : I shall see what impression it
“ makes, and I dare believe the secret of
“ her heart will not escape my penetration.
“ I hope soon to give you more certain
“ information which shall hasten your
“ return.”

“ This letter seemed to me a clear proof
that Matilda loved young Manteul, and I
felt a painful sensation, a spasm of the heart,
which I could not account for, and which
I endeavoured to conceal. I returned the
letter, and confirmed his hopes.—“ I have
written to my sister,” said he, “ exactly as
she prescribed, and I impatiently wait her
answer : if, as she thinks, it should be fa-
vourable, and if Matilda will permit me to
aspire to the honour and happiness of mak-
ing her mine, you, dear Lindorf, may be

serviceable to my interests with the Count, her brother. I may owe my felicity to you, and my friendship for you will thus be increased."

" This I solemnly promised, but not without a sensation that seemed very like jealousy, which the description he gave of the lovely Matilda augmented. I could not deny I had often seen her before she left Berlin, and he added, " You would not know her, Lindorf; no, you would not know her. You cannot imagine how much she is altered, how much improved. I know not whether it be possible to find a more beautiful woman; but a more graceful, a more charming one the world does not contain: she has every thing that can seduce and awe the heart. Her features have not a tame regularity; no, each has

an expression peculiar to itself; her countenance is continually varying, and is the mirror of a most excellent heart, and a most amiable mind. Never long the same, she is playful, sportive, foward, cheerful, pretending to take pet, and laughing at the deception she has occasioned. She inspires joy and pleasure in all around her. At other times, mild, fond, and full of sensibility, she would melt the coldest or the hardest heart. Such I beheld her, every day; and how might I resist so many allurements; or what shall be my happiness should she become mine?"

" My secret regret for having wilfully cast this happiness from me was the answer my heart returned to Manteuil. And had I!—had I been beloved by this charming lady! And did it once depend only on me

to

to have made her for ever mine! Oh! how little had I merited a gift the value of which too late I knew! What! had she not a right to forget the man who repaid her affection with the blackest ingratitude; neglected, abandoned her, and, on the very first occasion, yielding wholly to the love of another, repelled the heart which fondly had bestowed itself on him, and obliged it to seek a mate more worthy?—These ideas rapidly succeeded each other in my mind, and gave me an absent and gloomy air, at which Manteul might well have been surprised; but he was too much interested in the subject of the conversation to perceive it; was too desirous of continuing to speak of his dear Matilda, and his future hopes. It was not possible, however, for me to hear him unmoved; I, therefore, pretended I was not very well, and withdrew.

“ No

" No sooner was I alone than I began to inquire what my sensations were, and how I might feel this strange emotion concerning an event which I ought to have foreseen. Since I had not loved Matilda, since I had renounced her heart and hand, what were my rights? Ought I not to be happy that another had been more just, and made reparation for my wrongs? Alas! so far was I from being happy, from thinking thus, that i seemed as if Manteul bore away a treasure which appertained to me alone; nay, I was inconsistent, unjust enough to accuse Matilda of want of constancy, guilty as I myself had been! I recollect every circumstance of our acquaintance, those tender promises, so ingenuous, so often repeated in her letters, to love me, and me only, and exclaimed all women are inconstant; as if I myself had

not been an example that men have, at least that I had, very little reason for these reproaches !

“ I next reflected on the situation in which I stood with Manteul, and that folly which, a second time, had made me the rival of a friend. Yet durst I not allow myself to say I was his rival, but promised, if he were beloved, as every thing gave me reason to suppose, I would serve him with all the ardour of friendship : this I presently assured him of, and we waited, with equal impatience, the answer of his sister, which was to contain his sentence.”

“ Well, but Caroline ? Is she wholly forgotten ; already effaced from that heart where she had reigned with such unbounded sway ? ”

“ From

" From my own experience, Walstein, I am convinced the heart, when it absolutely loses hope, loses, in part, its pain; not, perhaps, in every instance, but in most; and, where love is the passion, whenever a new object is found, that, by any concurrence of circumstances, becomes interesting, the former is presently forgotten; at least, so far forgotten as not to be remembered with the same restless and tormenting sensations. I thought of Caroline, Countess of Walstein, but not of Caroline of Lichtfield, and was most happy to encourage the mutability; my imagination no longer wandered in the gardens of Rindaw, or dwelt in the pavilion, but saw Caroline at Berlin, there in company with the best of husbands, and enjoying her felicity. Happy was I when thus I might remember her without remorse, and, whenever

her

her name rose to memory, the name of my friend was, also, present; while that of Manteul, which Manteul was incessantly repeating, gave me an emotion, the origin of which I, who had had so much experience, could not mistake. Thus, my friend, you see my cure is far advanced; and you soon will learn in what manner I was perfectly restored.

"On our first arrival in England, we designed to have travelled through the different counties; but, supposing we should remain there all winter, intended to have deferred our journey till the spring. Manteul, determined to depart immediately, should his sister's letter recall him to Dresden, entreated me now to go with him and, at least, visit the most famous places. Since I had learned his secret I was ill at ease,

ease, and little inclined to rest long in one place. A journey, I imagined, would be some relief, and I willingly consented. We set off, therefore, passed through various counties, and a part of Wales, stopping to examine what was held most curious and interesting. This, dear Count, is not the moment to give you a description of a country where peace and liberty produce abundance, where the productive fields, cultivated by wealthy farmers, are not, like ours, the scenes of bloody battles, and all their direful attendants. Certain of finding them nourishment, the inhabitants fear not to marry and beget children. The towns, villages, and cities, are extremely populous, and every person seems happy; and, as the English nobility pass one part of the year at their country seats, where they contribute to the prosperity of their tenants,

tenants, those beautiful country seats are built with an elegance, and preserved in a style of grandeur and taste, very different from the gloomy magnificence of our antique chateaus. If we wish to form an idea of the beauties of nature, and the inexpressible charms of a country life, we must go to England."

" You augment the wish I have to see that country," said the Count; " I intend to take my dear Caroline thither; but, till that happens, shall be glad of farther information."

" I know not whether I am capable of affording you any," replied Lindorf, " for we travelled with too much rapidity, and our hearts and minds were too much pre-occupied, to remark the numerous things deserving

deserving notice. I have only just mentioned what must necessarily strike every foreigner who beholds England for the first time.

"Impatience to receive news from Dresden made us soon turn our faces towards London: I certainly was more uneasy than Manteul. The hope he had conceived contributed much to his happiness, which I rather envied than participated; and the more cheerful and animated I saw him the more did my secret chagrin and gloom increase. I spoke to him, however, continually, concerning Matilda, led him to repeat the most minute circumstances, and was as inexhaustible in my questions as Manteul was in replies. This was our chief subject of conversation, and, every moment, grief, regret, jealousy, and I may add love, acquired new force. Manteul

teul found no letters when we came to London; but, two days after our arrival, as I was rising, intending to breakfast with him, his servant brought me a letter, with my address. Surprised at this, I immediately was going to him, but was informed he was gone out, and would not be home before dinner. My astonishment increased, and I opened the letter, not without emotion, which still became more forcible when I saw the cover inclosed a letter that had been opened, addressed to Manteul, with the post-mark of Dresden, which, by its size, seemed still to contain another. This I supposed to be the answer of his sister, and a letter inclosed from Matilda. But wherefore not bring them himself? In spite of my impatience to see it, I began by reading the few lines Manteul had written in the cover.

"Here

"Here it is," said Lindorf, taking it from his pocket-book, "and imagine what was my surprise."

"I know not whether to the best of friends or most traitorous of men I inclose the letters I have just received; while I thus absolutely cede to the former opinion, I shall prove I wish to find I am not mistaken, however appearances may say the contrary.—And is Lindorf then the lover of Matilda? By her beloved? The husband of her choice, selected by her brother, and acknowledged by her heart? The man to whom she would instantly sacrifice the homage of the adoring world; and is it from herself I learn all this?—Oh! Lindorf, what motive can you have had for the inconceivable mysteriousness of your conduct?

“ conduct? I cannot think you capable of
“ base treachery; yet I had some right to
“ your confidence and sincerity.—I am
“ lost in doubt, and own I fear the conse-
“ quences of meeting you at this moment.
“ Send your answer to the Orange Coffee-
“ house; there can be no reason for longer
“ dissimulation, for, since you are beloved,
“ you no longer have a rival.

“ Manteul.”

“ It is impossible to tell you what I felt.
Was I—Was I still beloved by the charm-
ing, the constant Matilda? Was it for me,
ungrateful as I was, that she refused the
addresses of de Zastrow, of Manteul, nay
of *the whole world!* I opened the letter
and found one addressed to me; the hand
was well known, and an emotion, almost
involuntary, brought it to my lips. I was
about

about to open and enjoy the excess of my happiness when a sudden and bitter reflection stopped me. Again at the expence of a friend must I be happy; and this friend had reason to suppose me perfidious. I could not endure the thought. You, dear Count, are capable of imagining what my feelings were, and the increase they suffered by recollection. This was the second time love had assaulted friendship, and a second time was I desirous friendship should be victorious. I would not read the letters till I first had justified myself to Manteul, and till I had his free consent to read them: I locked them up, and instantly went in search of him to the coffee-house, where he had not yet been, and where the most probable way of meeting him would have been to wait; but waiting at this moment was impossible. I ran to seek him

him elsewhere. I rather chose speaking to him than writing a letter long enough to have explained all the reasons of my conduct, which little suited my impatience; but, as we might miss each other in the search, I left a line at the coffee-house, saying "he did me justice in believing me " incapable of perfidy; that, certainly, I " had many things to reproach myself with, " but not that of treachery towards him. " Matilda only had a right to complain. I " begged him to wait at the coffee-house, " and pledged myself to give him every ex- " planation he could require, assuring him I " should not take a moment's rest till he " had heard me. I had not read, nor would " read, a line in the letters he had sent me, " and hoped to prove how highly I valued " his esteem and friendship!"

After giving this note to the waiter I con-
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tinued my search, went to the Prussian Ambassador's, into the Park, to all our acquaintances, but missed him every where; and, returning to the coffee-house, found, to my great vexation, he had been there and was gone, but that he had left a note for me, which was this. (Lindorf read it to the Count.)

“ I wish to see and speak with you, dear
“ Lindorf, but it is not possible. Lord
“ Cavendish has requested me to accom-
“ pany him to Newmarket; he is setting
“ off immediately, and I scarcely have time
“ to write a word. You know how desir-
“ ous I am of seeing those famous races,
“ and I was the more ready to accept the
“ offer because my mind is at present in
“ great need of relief. Your note, and
“ especially your eagerness to see me before
“ you

“ you have read your letters, tell me all that
“ I at present wish to know. Read them,
“ dear friend, and if you are not, in half
“ an hour, on the road to Dresden you do no
“ merit your happiness. Could any thing
“ disturb, or alter, my esteem and friend-
“ ship for you it would be to hear you were
“ in London at this time to-morrow. Fare-
“ well, dear Lindorf, and be as happy as
“ you deserve; as happy as you must be
“ with the most lovely of women. I will
“ seek another like her, if possible, and whose
“ heart is free. Should the company and
“ sports of Newmarket have the effect
“ I hope, you will soon hear from me. I
“ doubt not but you will write and give
“ me the account you promise; not by way
“ of explanation, it is not requisite, but in
“ the confidence of friendship, and to one
“ who is infinitely interested both for Lin-

“ dorf and Matilda. *She*, you say, *only has a right to complain*—Happy Lindorf!—
“ Fly, behold her, and she will not have
“ that right long.

“ Manteul.”

“ Scarcely had I finished before I flew to the house of Lord Cavendish, hoping still to find him, but they were gone post, and I hesitated, for a moment, whether I should or should not follow; but motives so strong and a desire so ardent drew me elsewhere that I could not long resist. I once more read the note of Manteul, and finding he avoided me, “ Why,” said I, “ should I force the sight of a happy rival on him in the first paroxysm of grief?” Was I in reality beloved by the generous Matilda? Manteul, only, yet, had told me so, and I longed to see the confirmation. I, therefore, returned home, and read the two let-

ters

ters I am going to shew you. You will begin by reading that of Mademoiselle de Manteul, as I did, though most impatient to see the other, which, addressed to me, made my heart palpitate. I trembled to open a paper where each word, traced by the hand of Matilda, must be a reproach to this inconstant heart. She, perhaps, knew not my infidelity; but was I, therefore, less culpable?—Ah! when I did read, how did her ingenuous and affectionate soul, which infused itself into the paper, augment my wrongs, and make me more self-odious! “I began with this,” said Lindorf, giving it to the Count.

“ Mademoiselle de Manteul first asked a thousand pardons of her brother for having given him false hopes. Deceived herself, she had believed the thing she

“ wished to be was true, and that he had
“ been the secret object of Matilda’s love. It
“ was your letter,” added she, “ that very
“ letter I requested you to write, and from
“ which I expected effects so very differ-
“ ent, that destroyed all my hopes. No,
“ brother, you are not the beloved man.
“ Matilda has long since yielded her heart.
“ She refuses the homage of de Zastrow,
“ of you, and of the whole world, for the
“ sake of your new friend, that very Ba-
“ ron of Lindorf of whom you speak. She
“ saw but his name in your letter and, in-
“ stantly, her secret was betrayed: yet it
“ can now be no secret to you, for, being
“ thus intimate with that gentleman, he,
“ by this, has, certainly, made you his con-
“ fidant; certainly, has told you he has
“ long since been contracted to the young
“ Countess of Walstein. Her brother, the
“ most

" most intimate friend of Lindorf, promoted this union, and their hearts were accordant to his wishes. Matilda declares " nothing can dissolve this contract but " death; for, though Lindorf should even " prove inconstant, she never will. Your " passion, therefore, dear brother, for your " own sake, you will vanquish, and I think " I know you to be sufficiently reasonable " and generous to rest assured it will change " to friendship, and that you will take a " pleasure at once to serve Matilda and her " lover. This you may do by giving him " the inclosed letter, which the poor young " lady had no means of sending. It is not " she that requests this, but I; thinking " it the best means of effecting your cure. " Tell this Lover that his mistress is persecuted by her aunt, who will oblige her " to wed de Zastrow, whom she hates; that

“this will certainly occasion her death;
“prevail on him to depart instantly, that
“he may console, deliver, and carry her
“off, if necessary; and, indeed, I see no
“other means. What can he have to fear,
“since he is authorized by her brother?
“You well may suppose, Charles, I should
“have been happy had you been the man,
“but her heart was bestowed before she
“came to Dresden. Endeavour, there-
“fore, only to contribute to her happiness;
“and, perhaps, to your sister’s likewise.”

This latter phrase, which had escaped
the observation of Lindorf, made the Count
smile, and confirmed him in his former
opinion of Mademoiselle de Manteul. He
returned the letter to Lindorf, who then
gave him that from Matilda—“Read,”
said he, “and think what must have been
the impression it made on me!”

“Dresden—

" Dresden——Yes, M. Lindorf, Ma-
" tilda writes to you. Your friend, Ma-
" tilda. She does very wrong, to be sure;
" she ought not to be the first to break this
" excellent silence. Oh ! yes, yes; I know
" I do wrong ; but, I likewise know, I can-
" not help it. There are certain moments
" in life when the heart speaks louder than
" reason, and compels it to silence, and
" my heart says so many many things that
" I am obliged to listen and do whatever
" it pleases. It tells me, for example, I
" shall be less unhappy when I have relat-
" ed all my sufferings to my friend ; and I
" already feel it tells me truth. Since I
" have begun to write it seems as if my
" griefs were all changed into so many
" pleasures ; but, alas ! these will presently
" vanish ; and no sooner will my letter be
" ended than my torments will re-com-

"mence. My brother still in Russia, Lindorf still in England, de Zastrow still at Dresden, and poor Matilda still persecuted—My aunt requires impossibilities. Have I two hearts that I may bestow one on de Zastrow? And if I had a thousand, should not I give them all to—to—. Ever since I have begun to write this letter, nay, ever since I first thought of writing it, have I been incessantly torturing my imagination for the best manner of telling you what I feel, and how I might say all I have to say; but the more I think the less I succeed. It will be impossible you should understand me—I will think no more on the matter; I will suffer my hand and my heart to go their own way. I require sincerity, and have a right to give the example—Yes, M. Lindorf (see! " see!

“ see! I am still thinking about the man
“ (ner). Well then, dear, dear Lindorf! I
“ love you, and shall love you as long as I
“ live!—And, be assured, I will live and
“ die either Matilda Walstein or Matilda
“ Lindorf.—Do not be terrified at this
“ my eternal constancy. No, dear Lin-
“ dorf, it does not entail itself on *you*:
“ far am I from supposing you under the
“ same obligation. With myself only, not
“ with you, have I entered into this en-
“ gagement. I have heard men may
“ change as often as they please, without
“ becoming less estimable in their own
“ eyes, or even in the eyes of the women;
“ and it must be true, since my brother, the
“ wisest and the best of men, has changed,
“ nobody knows why, and seems no longer
“ to love his poor sister.—Ah! Lindorf,
“ dear Lindorf, do you supply the place

" of this brother, who forsakes me ; he is
" so far off I have no means of reclaiming
" his friendship ; but, certainly, yours,
" Lindorf, will come to my aid. Advise,
" tell me, how I may avoid a marriage I
" detest; preserve me for—Alas ! if not
" for Lindorf, for myself.—If it be true
" he loves another—I ask no questions,
" I shall know it soon enough ; yet it will
" not alter my present manner of thinking,
" neither with respect to you, the Baron de
" Zastrow, nor all the men on earth, for
" never among them all will I chuse more
" than one. This I know, and what far-
" ther knowledge do I want ? Only tell me
" you will remain the friend of Matilda ;
" the word *friend* will ascertain your since-
" rity ; which will be still farther confirmed
" by your frankness, and eagerness to an-
" swer this, to relieve me from the cruel in-
" quietude your silence, that of my bro-

" ther,

" ther, and the absence of you both occasion;
" from that neglect which resembles
" offence, forgetfulness, and death, and
" which certainly will be death, if it con-
" tinue much longer, to Matilda Wal-
" stein.

" P. S. I know not how to direct this
" letter, nor where to send it. Alas! I
" know not whether you or my brother
" neglect me the most; but you both
" are —— What in the world I love the
" best! Which, I am afraid, is as much as
" to say, ungrateful."

The Count was affected at reading this letter, and severely reprimanded himself for having suffered his passion for Caroline to make him so far forget his sister. He ought not to have been satisfied with writing a letter; he should have supposed it might be intercepted, and have gone himself.

self. He began to imagine he, only, was in the wrong.—“ You may think,” said Lindorf, “ what I felt from what you yourself feel.”—The Count was going to give back the letter.—“ No, keep it,” said Lindorf, “ and, if ever I should be wretched enough to forget it, or give my Matilda a moment’s grief, shew me but that letter again and I shall instantly repair the wrong.”

“ I did not hesitate a moment, after I had read it,” continued he, “ concerning how I must act. To fly to her, to console her, to intreat her to forgive the injuries I had done her, to tear her from the arms of tyranny, and dedicate my life to her happiness, was the first wish, the vow, of my heart. I clearly saw they deceived her, since she still supposed you in Russia. They, no doubt, had intercepted your letters; she was beset

with snares, and by people devoted to de Zastrow. The danger was so pressing that I determined immediately to depart; the recollection of Manteul only could have prevented me, and this his note counteracted. *Could any thing disturb, or alter, my esteem and friendship for you it would be to bear you were in London at this time to-morrow.* I determined, however, not to leave England till I had removed every doubt respecting my own conduct, and the mystery I had made of my engagements with Matilda. I, therefore, sat down and wrote a circumstantial account of what my motives and intentions were, in which I concealed nothing but the name of Caroline, and owned that what he had said of Matilda had more than revived my former inclination for her; but that, feeling she had every right to forget me, I had resolved

to

to make her every reparation I might, by aiding her in this her supposed new passion. My letter was long, and I was still writing when the servant, whom Manteul had taken with him, returned. He, on recollection, had sent him back with another note, which was but a sort of repetition of the preceding one, fearing lest it had not come to hand, and that my departure was by that means deferred. He added new and stronger motives to hasten me, and, that I might not have the least uneasiness on his account, assured me, "He looked
" on it as a lucky event. Too young, at
" present, to marry (he is not twenty) no
" woman but Matilda could have excused
" his entering into the marriage state. The
" suspicion of being beloved by her had
" led him wild, but the conviction of the
" contrary had restored him to reason and
" liberty. By these he would profit, would
" study,

“ study, and travel for some years, and
“ hoped, when we met again, to find me
“ the happy husband of the most lovely of
“ women. Whatever my reasons might
“ haye been for forsaking her, he was cer-
“ tain I no longer should be inconstant the
“ moment I saw her. He knew me too
“ well to believe I should not immediately
“ fly to her assistance, though it were but
“ from motives of friendship, and if I even
“ were incapable of love. He concluded
“ by telling me his servant had orders to
“ return to him as soon as he had seen me
“ get into the post-chaise.”

“ I sent back the voluminous letter I
had written, and his servant departed for
Newmarket, at the same time that I left
London. The wind was favourable, and
we had a quick passage. I found Varner
at Hamburg, where he had been several
weeks,

weeks, detained by contrary winds, and at which he had been much afflicted. He gave me your short note, and my banker, the same day, delivered the succeeding letter; both were equally pressing, both requested my immediate return, without explaining your motives. Of this there was no need; the request of Walstein need not fear disobedience, and, had I not been returning, I instantly should have set out. Yet how must I confess that my heart made me take the road to Dresden instead of that to Berlin! I have no excuse unless it were a *presentiment*. I endeavoured to persuade myself that a few days delay could not give you any pain, though it might be of the utmost consequence to Matilda. I was anxious to see her, to persuade her to come with me, and bring her to her brother. Nay, I even interpreted your two so pres-

sing

sing letters into positive orders that related solely to Matilda, and concluded I best was answering your intentions by flying to her aid before I saw you. I therefore stopped only at Hamburg till good horses and equipage could be found. The rest you know; my rencontre with de Zastrow, and my surprise at seeing Matilda leap out of the post-chaise. Though I have not yet ventured to tell you, before her, how much the alteration in her person affected, astonished, and enchanted me; how superior she was to the Matilda I had formerly known, to her Manteul had described, or, even, to what my imagination had supposed. Oh! Walstein, how beauteous! how angelic did she seem, embellished as her countenance was by the emotions of her heart! The first words she uttered had something of tenderness, of feeling, of soul, which it is impossible

possible to convey. I see her now fly from the carriage, run with open arms, and hear her utter, "Lindorf, dear Lindorf, they want to steal your Matilda from you, who is, and only will be, yours!"

"Her native innocence is above all suspicion; she loves, herself, and thinks it most certain she is, herself, beloved. Not a year's silence, not all that others have said, nor all that I have done, could shake her constancy. The moment she sees me they are all forgotten, and not a shadow of doubt remains. Ah! when fainting and feeble she sunk into my arms, pale, inanimate, and with half closed eyes, how interesting was it to my soul! With what ardour did I swear to live for her, and her alone! On her lips, as I bore her into the house, I pronounced the vow which I never can forget, no more than I can the rapturous sensations I that moment experienced.

"My

" My affair with de Zastrow, my wound, the tender care she has taken of me, her understanding, her grace, her ingenuous mind, all have augmented my passion. Yet will I own I felt some emotion at the sight of Caroline; but it was of a very different kind from what I had formerly known. I saw with pleasure, yes, Walstein, with infinite pleasure, you were beloved, and Caroline was to me as a sister, the wife of my friend and brother. And now, dear Count, you know my inmost heart, and, I hope, will not delay to bestow the happiness I so ardently desire, which present conviction tells me I deserve, and which will make felicity perfect."

" My felicity," replied the Count, tenderly embracing him, " will not be perfect till I behold Matilda and Lindorf as happy as I myself am; nor shall it be long before

fore these new bonds of affinity and friendship shall be formed, which will leave me nothing farther to wish."

Walstein, then, related all his past scenes with Caroline. Lindorf shuddered at the idea of the divorce. "Good God!" said he, "could you suppose I would be accessory to such a sacrifice! That I would be happy at the expence of Walstein!"

"It was the happiness of Caroline that was in contest, and neither thou nor I, Lindorf, ought then to recede. The letters I wrote, and which thou wouldest have found on thy arrival, would have removed every scruple: friendship and delicacy must have yielded to motives more decisive. My reasons were good, and my measures well taken, and thou couldest not but have acted accordingly."

"Ask me not how I should have acted,"
replied

replied Lindorf; “ I, fortunately, have not been put to the proof. I am proud of being your brother. You only could deserve Caroline, and she alone could equal your virtues. Matilda, perhaps, is, by temper and nature, better suited to your friend Lindorf.”

“ She does not know,” said the Count, “ that Caroline has been her rival?” “ She knows every thing,” replied Lindorf, with vivacity. “ She has a right to know every thing. My heart were unworthy of her had I any secrets. In justice, I was obliged to account for my coolness, my silence, my voyage to England. Might I deceive her? No, impossible; and, had I even so intended, no such intention could have been kept. Her noble frankness, her open candour, would irresistibly have ensured like confidence and like sincerity. No sooner

were

were we alone in the post-chaise than she spoke of you and your marriage; and asked if I knew her sister. A full confession of all that had passed was my answer; and, far from feeling jealousy or vexation, I found, as I spoke, she became attached to Caroline, was desirous of her friendship, and determined to imitate her best qualities and virtues. "Oh! how dearly," said she, "shall I love this charming Caroline! How happy will she make my brother! And how gladly shall I learn, from her, to reclaim and fix my rover, my Lindorf!"—Since Matilda has seen her, she has told me, with a tone of sincerity that leaves no doubt on the mind, "Ah! Lindorf, how perfectly are you justified in your passion! I never could have pardoned you had you seen Caroline with indifference!" Such, dear Count, is
your

your sister; and judge whether I ought not to adore her."

Arrived at Berlin, the first care of the Count was to present his friend and sister to the King, and request his approbation of their marriage; which obtained, the happy family went to the Walstein estate, where Caroline had fled *from* her husband, on the bridal day, and *to* him, on the morning of the projected divorce, and of which Justin was steward. There, in the Count's chapel, was the marriage celebrated, without other witnesses than Walstein, Caroline, the tenants of the Chateau, and some of the villagers. As they left the church, Louisa came to pay her respects to Lindorf, to whom she was presented by Caroline. He beheld both these lovely women, who formerly had raised such commotions in his breast, with perfect tranquillity; and, pres-

sing the hand of the Count who stood next him, "I feel, at this moment," said he, "I am worthy to be the brother of Walstein. I was distracted for Louisa, Caroline I adored, but Matilda I love, and shall for ever love!"

The CONCLUSION.

To those who wish to be informed of every thing that passes we shall further say, that Lindorf continued thus to think; that he made his lovely lady happy, attained to the highest rank in the army, and distinguished himself on several occasions. That Edmund, Count of Walstein, was a pillar to the throne, a friend of the King, a protector of the people, a supporter of the wretched, and that he found, in the constant affection of his dear Caroline, and

the good conduct of his children, the full recompence of his virtues; while Caroline, the adored, the beloved Caroline, meeting the admiration she merited, was the happiest as she was the most angelic of women.

We shall likewise add that the young Baron de Zastrow, admiring his Parisian graces, engrafted on a German trunk, finding he pleased only Mademoiselle de Manteul, who pleased not him, returned to Paris and his gaming friends, pursued his theatrical conquests, and made such good use of his time, money, and constitution that, in less than a year, he was ruined, diseased, and dead. His aunt, perceiving Matilda had had good reason for her refusal, pardoned, and left her all her wealth.

Mademoiselle de Manteul retired, at first, into a convent; after which she obtained the place of a Maid of Honour, at court;

court; where, exercising that spirit of intrigue with which she was so liberally endowed, she became perfectly competent to her post.

Her young brother, the well disposed and amiable Manteul, for whom we have been interested, and whom we saw set off to Newmarket, met with Lady Sophia Seymour, who was cousin german to the Count and Matilda, and who greatly resembled the latter. Manteul now found he was far from having suffered a loss, inasmuch as Lady Sophia, no-wise inferior to her lovely cousin, loved him with all the ardour with which Matilda loved Lindorf. The Count, in a voyage he made to London, in company with Caroline, had the pleasure of forming this union, and making two more lovers happy.

THE END.



